AN EXTRACT OF THE Chriſtian's Pattern: OR, A TREATISE ON THE IMITATION OF CHRIST.

WRITTEN IN LATIN

By THOMAS à KEMPIS.

Abridged and publiſhed in Engliſh.

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Printed by G. STORY, North-Green, Worſhip-Street, London; and ſold by G. WHITFIELD, City-Road. 1800.

[Price Bound 1s.]

XC 803.570*

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NOV. 22, 1921

The PREFACE.

AS it is impoſſible for any one to know the uſefulneſs of this TREATISE, till he has read it in ſuch a manner as it deſerves; inſtead of heaping up commendations of it, which thoſe who have ſo read it do not want, and thoſe who have not will not believe: I have tranſcribed a few plain directions how to read this, (or indeed any other religious book,) with improvement.

1. Aſſign ſome ſtated time every day for this pious employment. If any indiſpenſable buſineſs unexpectedly robs you of your hour of retirement, take the next hour for it: When ſuch large portions of each day are ſo willingly beſtowed on bodily refreſhments, can you ſcruple aſotting ſome little time daily for the improvement of your immortal ſoul?

2. Prepare yourſelf for reading by purity of intention, whereby you ſingly aim at your ſoul's benefit; and then, in a ſhort ejaculation, beg God's grace to enlighten your underſtanding, and diſpoſe your heart for receiving what you read; and that you may both know what he requires of you, and ſeriouſly reſolve to execute his will when known.

3. Be ſure to read not curiouſly and haſtily; but leiſurely, ſeriouſly and with great attention; with proper intervals and pauſes, that you may allow time for the enlightenings of Divine Grace. Stop every now and then, to recollect what you have read, and conſider how to reduce it to practice. Farther, let your reading be continued and regular, not rambling and deſultory. It ſhews a vitiated palate, to taſte of many diſhes without fixing upon, or being ſatisfied with any; not but what it will be of great ſervice to read over and over thoſe paſſages, which more nearly concern yourſelf, and more cloſely affect your own practice or inclinations: eſpecially if you add a particular examination upon each.

4. Labour for a temper correſpondent to what you read; otherwiſe it will prove empty and unprofitable, while it only enlightens your underſtanding, without influencing your will, or inflaming your affections. Therefore interſperſe here and there pious aſpirations to GOD, and petitions for his Grace. Select alſo any remarkable ſayings or advices, treaſuring them up in your memory to ruminate and conſider on: which you may either in time of need draw forth, as arrows from a quiver againſt temptation, againſt this or

that

that vice which you are more particularly addicted to; or make use of as incitements to humility, patience, the love of God, or any virtue.

5. Conclude all with a short ejaculation to God; that he would preserve and prosper his good seed sown in your heart, that it may bring forth its fruit in due season. And think not this will take up too much of your time, for you can never bestow it to so good advantage.

THE

THE CHRISTIAN's PATTERN.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

Of the Imitation of CHRIST, *and contempt of the vanities of the world.*

"HE *that followeth me ſhall not walk in darkneſs,*" ſaith the Lord. Theſe are the words of CHRIST, by which we are admoniſhed, that we ought to imitate his life and manners, if we would be truly enlightened, and delivered from all blindneſs of heart.

Let therefore our chief endeavour be, to meditate upon the life of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. What will it avail thee to diſpute ſublimely of the Trinity, if thou be

void of humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity?

Truly, sublime words do not make a man holy and just; but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God.

I had rather feel compunction, than know the definition thereof.

If thou didst know the whole Bible, and the sayings of all the philosophers by heart, what would all that profit thee without the love of God?

Vanity of vanities! all is vanity, but to love God, and to serve him only.

3. It is therefore vanity to seek after perishing riches. It is also vanity to seek honours.

It is also vanity to follow the desires of the flesh, and to labour for that for which thou must afterwards suffer grievous punishment

It is vanity to wish to live long, and be careless to live well.

It is vanity to mind this present life, and not those things which are to come.

It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away; and not to hasten thither, where everlasting joys remain.

II. *Of thinking humbly of ourſelves.*

ALL men naturally deſire to know; but what availeth knowledge without the fear of God?

Surely an humble huſbandman, that ſerveth God, is better than a proud philoſopher, that, neglecting himſelf, ſtudies the courſe of the heavens.

He that knoweth himſelf, is vile in his own eyes, and is not pleaſed with the praiſes of men.

If I underſtood all things in the world, and had not charity, what would that help me in the ſight of God, who will judge me according to my deeds?

2. Ceaſe from an inordinate deſire of knowing, for therein is much diſtraction and deceit.

There are many things, to know which, doth little profit the ſoul.

And he is very unwiſe, that minds any other things than thoſe that tend to the welfare of his ſoul.

Many words do not ſatisfy the ſoul; but a pure conſcience giveth confidence towards God.

3. The more thou knoweſt, and the better

better thou underſtandeſt, the more grievouſly ſhalt thou be judged, unleſs thy life be the more holy.

Be not therefore lifted up; but rather let the knowledge given thee make thee afraid.

If thou thinkeſt that thou knoweſt much; yet there are many more things which thou knoweſt not. Be not overwiſe, but rather acknowledge thine own ignorance.

If thou wilt know any thing profitably, love to be unknown, and of no account.

4. The higheſt and moſt profitable leſſon is the true knowledge of ourſelves.

It is great wiſdom to eſteem ourſelves nothing, and to think always well and highly of others.

If thou ſhouldſt ſee another openly ſin, yet oughteſt thou not to eſteem thyſelf better than him.

We are all frail; but remember, none more frail than thyſelf.

III. *Of the Doctrine of Truth.*

HAPPY is he, whom Truth itſelf teacheth, not by figures and

words that paſs away, but by an immediate communication of itſelf.

Our own opinion and our own ſenſe often deceive us, and diſcern little.

What availeth it to diſpute about hidden things, for being ignorant of which we ſhall not be reproved at the day of judgment?

It is a great folly to neglect things profitable, and to think of curious or hurtful things.

2. And what have we to do with dry notions? He, to whom the Eternal Word ſpeaketh, is delivered from a world of vain notions.

From the One Word are all things, and all ſpeak that One; and this is He who alſo ſpeaketh unto us. No man underſtandeth or judgeth rightly without him.

He, to whom all things are one, who reduceth all things to one, and ſeeth all things in one, may be ſtable in heart, and remain peaceable in God.

O God, the truth, make me one with thee in everlaſting love. I am weary of reading and hearing many things; in thee is all that I deſire.

Let

Let all creatures be ſilent in thy ſight; ſpeak thou alone to me.

3. The more ſimple any one is, the more doth he underſtand without labour; becauſe he receiveth the light of knowledge from above.

A pure, ſimple, and ſtable ſpirit is not diſſipated, though it be employed in many works; becauſe it does all to the glory of God, and ſeeks not itſelf in any thing it doth.

What hinders and troubles thee, but the unmortified affections of thine own heart?

Who hath a ſharper combat than he who laboureth to overcome himſelf?

This ought to be our buſineſs, to conquer ourſelves, and daily to advance in holineſs.

4. All perfection in this life hath ſome imperfection mixed with it; and no knowledge of ours is without ſome darkneſs.

An humble knowledge of thyſelf is a ſurer way to God, than a deep ſearch after ſcience.

Yet knowledge is not to be blamed, it being good in itſelf, and ordained by God:

God: But a good conſcience and a virtuous life, are always to be preferred before it.

5. O if men beſtowed as much labour in the rooting out vices, as they do in moving of queſtions, there would not be ſo great wickedneſs, nor ſo much hurt done in the world.

Surely at the day of judgment we ſhall not be examined what we have read, but what we have done: Not how well we have ſpoken, but how religiouſly we have lived.

Tell me, where are now all thoſe doctors and maſters, with whom thou waſt well acquainted, whilſt they lived and flouriſhed in learning?

Now others poſſeſs their preferments, and perhaps do ſcarce ever think of them. In their life-time they ſeemed ſomething, but now they are not ſpoken of.

6. O how quickly doth the glory of the world paſs away! O that their life had been anſwerable to their learning! Then had their ſtudy been to good purpoſe.

How many periſh in this world, be-

cauſe

cauſe they rather chuſe to be great than humble: Therefore they become vain in their imaginations.

He is truly great that is great in Love.

He is truly great, that is little in his own eyes, and that maketh no account of any height of honour.

He is truly wiſe that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may win Chriſt. And he is truly learned, that doth the will of God, and forſaketh his own will.

IV. *Of Prudence in our Actions.*

WE muſt not give ear to every ſaying or ſuggeſtion, but warily and leiſurely ponder things according to the will of God.

But alas! ſuch is our weakneſs, that we often more eaſily believe and ſpeak evil of others than good.

Good men do not eaſily give credit to every thing one tells them; becauſe they know human frailty is prone to evil, and ever ſubject to fail in words.

2. It is great wiſdom not to be raſh in thy proceedings, nor to ſtand ſtiffly in thine own opinion.

It is wiſdom not to believe every thing that thou heareſt, nor preſently to relate again to others what thou haſt heard, or doſt believe.

Conſult with a wiſe and conſcientious man, and ſeek to be inſtructed by a better than thyſelf, rather than to follow thine own inventions.

A good life maketh a man wiſe according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. The humbler one is, the more reſigned unto God, the more prudent and contented ſhall he be in all things.

V. *Of reading the holy Scriptures.*

TRUTH, not eloquence, is to be ſought in the holy ſcripture. All ſcripture is to be read by the ſame ſpirit wherewith it was written.

We ought to read plain and devout books as willingly as high and profound ones.

Let not the authority of the writer, whether he be of great or ſmall learning, but the love of pure truth, draw thee to read.

Search not who ſpake this, but mark what is ſpoken. 2. Men

2. Men paſs away, but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

God ſpeaks unto us ſundry ways, without reſpect of perſons.

Our own curioſity often hindereth us in reading the ſcriptures, when we will examine and diſcuſs that which we ſhould rather paſs over without much ado.

If thou deſire to profit, read humbly, ſimply, and faithfully.

Enquire willingly, and hear with ſilence the words of holy men; diſlike not the parables of the elders, for they are not ſpoken without cauſe.

VI. *Of avoiding vain hopes and pride.*

HE is vain that putteth his truſt in man or creatures.

Be not aſhamed to ſerve others for the love of Jeſus Chriſt; nor to be eſteemed poor in this world.

Preſume not upon thyſelf, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will aſſiſt thy good-will.

Truſt not in thy knowledge, nor in any living creature; but rather in the

grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth the proud.

2. Glory not in wealth, nor in friends; but in God, who giveth all things, and desireth to give thee himself above all.

Value not thyself for the strength or beauty of thy body, which is spoiled and disfigured with a little sickness.

Pride not thyself in thy natural gifts or wit, lest thereby thou displease God.

3. Esteem not thyself better than others, lest in the sight of God thou be accounted worse than they.

Be not proud of thy good works; for the judgment of God is far different from the judgment of men.

If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others.

It hurts thee not, if thou thinkest thyself worse than all men: But it hurts thee much, to prefer thyself before any one.

The humble enjoy continual peace; but in the heart of the proud is envy, and frequent indignation.

VII. *That*

VII. *That too much familiarity is to be ſhunned.*

LAY not thy heart open to every one; but treat of thy affairs with the wiſe and ſuch as fear God.

Converſe not much with young people and ſtrangers.

Flatter not the rich; neither do thou appear willingly before great perſons.

Keep company with the humble and ſimple, with the devout and virtuous; and confer with them of thoſe things that may edify.

Be not familiar with any woman; but in general commend all good women to God.

Deſire to be familiar with God alone, and his word, and fly the knowledge of men.

We muſt have charity towards all: but familiarity with all is not expedient.

VIII. *Of avoiding ſuperfluity of words.*

FLY the tumult of the world as much as thou canſt: For we are quickly defiled and enthralled with vanity.

I could wiſh that I had often-times held my peace, and that I had not been in company.

Why are we ſo fond of converſation, when notwithſtanding we ſeldom return to ſilence without hurt of conſcience?

We willingly talk of thoſe things which we moſt love or deſire, or of thoſe which we feel moſt contrary and troubleſome to us.

But alas! oftentimes in vain, and to no end; for this outward comfort doth obſtruct the inward conſolation.

Therefore we muſt watch and pray, leſt our time paſs away idly.

2. If it be lawful and expedient for thee to ſpeak, ſpeak thoſe things that may ediſy.

However, devout converſation upon ſpiritual ſubjects, doth greatly further our ſpiritual growth, eſpecially where perſons of one mind and ſpirit are joined together in God.

IX. *The obtaining of peace, and zeal for improvement.*

WE might enjoy much peace, if we would not buſy ourſelves

with the words and deeds of others, in which we have no concern.

How can he live long in peace, that meddles with the cares of others, and little or ſeldom recollecteth himſelf within his own breaſt?

Bleſſed are the ſingle-hearted for they ſhall enjoy much peace.

2. We are too much taken up with our own paſſions, and too ſolicitous for tranſitory things.

We are not inflamed with a fervent deſire to grow better every day; and therefore we remain cold and indifferent,

3. If we were dead unto ourſelves and diſengaged from low affections, then ſhould we reliſh divine things:

But when any adverſity befalleth us, we turn ourſelves to human comforts.

4. If we would endeavour, like men of courage, to ſtand in the battle, we ſhould ſurely feel the aſſiſtance of God from heaven: For he furniſheth us with occaſions of ſtriving, that we may conquer.

If we place our progreſs in religion only in outward obſervances, our devotion will quickly be at an end.

But let us lay the axe to the root, that being freed from inordiate paſſions, we may find reſt to our ſouls.

X. *Of the uſefulneſs of adverſity.*

IT is good that we have ſometimes troubles and croſſes; for they often make a man enter into himſelf, and conſider that he ought not to place his truſt in any worldly thing.

It is good that we be ſometimes contradicted; and that men think ill of us; and this, although we do and intend well.

For then we more diligently ſeek God for our inward witneſs, when outwardly we are contemned by men.

2. Wherefore a man ſhould ſettle himſelf ſo fully in God, that he need not ſeek comforts of men.

When a man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts; then he underſtandeth better the great need he hath of God.

3. So long as we live in this world, we cannot be without temptation.

Hence it is written in Job, The life of man is a warfare upon earth.

Every one therefore ought to take care as to his own temptations, and to watch in prayer, leſt he be deceived by the devil; who never ſleepeth, but goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour.

4. Temptations are often very profitable to men, though they be troubleſome and grievous: for in them a man is humbled, purified, and inſtructed.

All the ſaints have paſſed through and profited by many tribulations and temptations. And they, that would not bear temptations, became reprobates and fell away.

There is no place ſo ſecret, where there are no temptations.

5. There is no man that is altogether ſecure from temptations whilſt he liveth.

When one temptation goeth away, another cometh; and we ſhall ever have ſomething to ſuffer.

Many ſeek to fly temptations, and fall more grievouſly into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience and humility we conquer all our enemies.

6. He, that only avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by

the

the roots, ſhall profit little; yea, temptations will ſoon return unto him, and he ſhall feel them worſe than before.

By patience (through God's help) thou ſhalt eaſily overcome, than by harſh and diſquieting efforts in thy own ſtrength.

Often take counſel in temptations: and deal not roughly with him that is tempted.

7. The beginning of temptation is inconſtancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a ſhip without a rudder is toſſed to and fro with the waves; ſo the man that is negligent is many ways tempted.

Fire tryeth iron, and temptation a juſt man.

We know not often what we are able to do; but temptations ſhew us what we are.

We muſt be watchful, eſpecially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more eaſily overcome, if he be not ſuffered to enter the door of our hearts, but be reſiſted without the gate at his firſt knock.

Wherefore one ſaid, "Withſtand

the beginning; for an after-remedy comes too late."

First there occureth to the mind a ſimple evil thought; then a ſtrong imagination; afterwards delight; and laſtly conſent.

And ſo by little and little our malicious enemy getteth entrance, when he is not reſiſted in the beginning.

And the longer one is ſlack in reſiſting, the weaker he becomes daily, and the enemy ſtronger againſt him.

8. Some ſuffer the greateſt temptation in the beginning of their converſion; others in the latter end. Others again are much troubled, almoſt throughout their life.

Some are but ſlightly tempted, according to the Wiſdom which weigheth the ſtates of men, and ordereth all things for the good of his people.

9. We ought therefore, when we are tempted, ſo much the more fervently to pray unto God, who ſurely will make with the temptation a way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it. Let us therefore humble ourſelves under the hand of God, in all temptations

and

and tribulations, for he will exalt the humble in ſpirit.

10. In temptations and afflictions man is proved how much he hath profited. Neither is it any ſuch great thing if a man be devout and fervent, when he feeleth no affliction; but if in time of adverſity, he bear himſelf patiently, there is hope then of great proficiency.

Some are kept from great temptations; that, being humbled, they may never truſt themſelves in great matters, who are baffled in ſo ſmall things.

XI. *Of avoiding raſh judgment.*

TURN thine eyes unto thyſelf, and beware thou judge not the deeds of other men.

In judging of others a man laboureth in vain, often erreth, and eaſily ſinneth: But in judging and examining himſelf he labours fruitfully.

We often judge of things according as we fancy them; for affection bereaves us eaſily of a right judgment.

If God were always our deſire, we ſhould not be ſo much troubled when our inclinations are oppoſed.

2. But oftentimes ſomething lurks within, which draweth us after it.

Many ſecretly ſeek themſelves in their actions, but know it not.

They live in peace of mind, when things are done according to their will; but if things ſucceed otherwiſe than they deſire, they are ſtraightway troubled.

Diverſity of inclinations and opinions often cauſe diſſentions between religious perſons, between friends and countrymen.

3. An old cuſtom is hardly broken, and no man is willing to be led farther than himſelf can ſee.

If thou doſt more rely upon thine own reaſon, than upon Jeſus Chriſt, late, if ever, ſhalt thou become illuminated.

XII. *Of works done out of charity.*

THE outward work, without charity, profiteth nothing; but whatſoever is done out of charity, be it never ſo little, or contemptible in the ſight of the world, is wholly fruitful.

For God weigheth more with how much

much love one worketh, than how much he doth.

2. He doth much, that loveth much. He doth much that doth a thing well. He doth well, that ſerveth his neighbour, and not his own will.—Often it ſeemeth to be charity, when it is rather carnality: becauſe natural inclination, ſelf-will, hope of reward, and deſire of our own intereſt, are motives that men are rarely free from.

3. He that hath pure and perfect charity, ſeeketh himſelf in nothing; but only deſireth in all things that God ſhould be exalted. He envieth none, becauſe he ſeeketh not his own ſatisfaction; neither rejoiceth in himſelf, but chuſes God only for his portion.

He attributeth nothing that is good to any man, but wholly referreth it unto God; from whom, as from the fountain, all things proceeded; and in whom finally all the ſaints reſt.

O that he had but one ſpark of true charity, then he would certainly diſcern that all earthly things are full of vanity!

XIII.

XIII. *Of bearing with the defects of others.*

THOSE things, that a man cannot amend in himself, or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, until God orders things otherwise.

Think, that perhaps it is better so, for thy trial and patience.

2. If one that is once or twice warned will not give over, contend not with him; but commit all to God, that his will may be done, and his name honoured in all his servants, who well knoweth how to turn evil into good.

Study to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, of what sort soever they be; for that thou thyself also hast many, which must be suffered by others.

If thou canst not make *thyself* such a one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking?

We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

We would have others exactly corrected,

rected, and yet we will not be corrected ourſelves.

The liberty of others diſpleaſeth us, and yet we will not have our own deſires denied.

Thus it appears, how ſeldom we weigh our neighbour in the ſame balance with ourſelves.

3. If all men were perfect, what ſhould we have to ſuffer of our neighbour for God?

But now God hath thus ordered it, that we may learn to bear one another's burdens; for no man is without fault: no man but hath his burden; no man is ſelf-ſufficient; no man has wiſdom enough for himſelf: but we ought to bear with one another, comfort, help, inſtruct, and admoniſh one another.

Occaſions of adverſity beſt diſcover how great virtue each one hath.

For occaſions make not a man frail, but ſhew what he is.

XIV. *Of the Examples of the holy Fathers.*

CONSIDER the lively examples of the holy fathers, in whom true religion

ligion ſhone, and thou ſhalt ſee how little it is, and almoſt nothing which we do now.

Alas! What is our life, if it be compared to their's?

Thoſe ſaints and friends of Chriſt ſerved the Lord in hunger and thirſt, in cold and nakedneſs, in labour and wearineſs, in watchings and faſtings, in perſecutions, and many reproaches.

2. O how many and grievous tribulations ſuffered the apoſtles, martyrs, confeſſors, virgins, and all the reſt that would follow the ſteps of Chriſt. They hated their lives in this world that they might poſſeſs their ſouls in everlaſting life!

O how ſtrict and ſelf-renouncing a life led thoſe holy fathers in the wilderneſs! How long and grievous temptations ſuffered they! How often were they aſſaulted by the enemy! What frequent and fervent prayers offered they to God! How rigorous an abſtinence did they daily uſe! How great zeal and care they had of their ſpiritual proficiency! How ſtrong a combat had they for the overcoming of their luſts!

How

How pure and upright an attention did they preſerve unto God!

All the day they laboured, and ſpent part of the night in prayer; although, even while they laboured, they did not ceaſe from mental prayer.

3. They ſpent all their time uſefully: all their hours of devotion ſeemed ſhort: and by reaſon of the great ſweetneſs they felt in contemplations, they forgot the neceſſity of corporal refreſhments.

They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends, and kinsfolk; they deſired to have nothing of the world: they took no more of any thing than was neceſſary for the ſuſtenance of life.

They were poor in earthly things, but rich in grace.

Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly were refreſhed with divine conſolation.

4. They were ſtrangers to the world, but friends to God.

They ſeemed to themſelves as nothing, and were deſpiſed by the world: but they were precious in the eyes of God.

They

They were grounded in humility, walked in love and patience, and therefore profited daily in ſpirit.

Help me, O Lord God, in thy holy ſervice, and grant that I may now, this day, begin perfectly: for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

Much diligence is neceſſary to him that will profit much.

If he that firmly purpoſeth often faileth, what ſhall he do that ſeldom, or feebly purpoſeth any thing?

It may fall out ſundry ways that we break our reſolution: and a little omiſſion of ſpiritual exerciſes ſeldom paſſes without ſome loſs.

The purpoſe of juſt men depends not ſo much upon their own wiſdom as upon the grace of God, on whom they always rely in whatſoever they take in hand. For man doth purpoſe, but God doth diſpoſe; neither is the way of man in himſelf.

5. If any accuſtomed exerciſe be ſometimes omitted, either for ſome act of piety, or profit to thy brother, it may eaſily afterwards be recovered again.

But to omit it out of ſloth, or careleſſneſs,

leſſneſs, is very blameable, and will be found pernicious.

We muſt diligently ſearch into, and regulate, both the outward and inward man; becauſe both contribute to our advancement.

Gird thy loins like a man againſt the aſſaults of the devil; bridle thy appetite, and thou ſhalt the more eaſily bridle all the motions of the fleſh.

Be thou at no time idle; but either be reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavouring ſomething for the public good.

Bleſſed is that ſervant whom, when his LORD *cometh, he ſhall find watching: verily I ſay unto you, He ſhall make him ruler over all his goods.*

XV. *Of the love of Solitude and Silence.*

SEEK a convenient time to retire into thyſelf.

Meddle not with curioſities.

Read ſuch things as may rather yield compunction of heart, than buſy thy head.

If thou wilt withdraw thyſelf from

ſuperfluous talk and uſeleſs viſits, as alſo from hearkening after news and rumours, thou ſhalt find ſufficient leiſure to meditate on good things.

2. One ſaid, " As often as I have been among men, I returned like a man;" and this we often find true, when we have been long in company.

It is eaſier not to ſpeak at all, than not to ſpeak more than we ſhould.

It is eaſier to keep at home, than to be ſufficiently upon our guard when we are abroad.

He therefore, that intends to attain to inward and ſpiritual things, muſt with Jeſus retire from the multitude.

No man ſafely goes abroad, but he who is willing to ſtay at home.

No man can ſpeak ſafely, but he who is willing to hold his peace.

No man ruleth ſafely, but he that is willing to be ruled.

No man ſafely commands, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

No man ſafely rejoiceth, unleſs he hath within him the teſtimony of a good conſcience:

And

And yet the ſecurity of the ſaints was always full of the fear of God.

Neither were they leſs careful and humble in themſelves, becauſe they ſhone outwardly with grace and great virtues.

3. Thoſe have often through confidence in themſelves fallen into the greateſt dangers, who have been in the greateſt eſteem among men.

Wherefore it is more profitable to many not to be altogether free from temptations, leſt they ſhould be too ſecure; leſt they ſhould be puffed up with pride, or too freely incline to worldly comforts.

O how good a conſcience would he keep, that would never ſeek after tranſitory joy, or intangle himſelf with the things of this world!

O how great peace and quietneſs would he poſſeſs, that would cut off all vain ſolicitude, and think only upon divine things, and ſuch as are profitable for his ſoul!

If thou deſireſt compunction of heart, enter into thy cloſet, and ſhut out the tumults of the world, according to the

advice of the Pſalmiſt, iv. 4, *Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be ſtill.*

In thy cloſet thou ſhalt find, what abroad thou often loſeſt. The more thou frequenteſt thy cloſet, the more thou wilt like it: the leſs thou comeſt thereunto, the more thou wilt loathe it.

If in the beginning of thy converſion thou paſſeſt much time in thy cloſet, it will afterward be to thee a dear friend and pleaſant comfort.

4. In ſilence and in ſtillneſs a religious ſoul profiteth, and learneth the hidden truth of the holy ſcriptures.

There ſhe findeth rivers of joys, and may be ſo much the more familiar with her Creator, by how much the farther off ſhe liveth from all worldly tumult.

5. Why art thou deſirous to ſee that which is unlawful for thee to enjoy! For the world paſſeth away, and the deſires thereof.

Our ſinful deſires draw us to rove abroad; but when the time is paſſed, what carrieſt thou home with thee, but a burdened conſcience, and a diſſipated heart?

A merry going out often bringeth a mournful return, and a joyful evening a sad morning.

So all carnal joys enter pleasantly, but in the end bite and sting to death.

What canst thou see elsewhere, which thou canst not see here? Behold the heavens and the earth, and all the elements; for of these are all things created.

6. What canst thou see any where that can long continue under the sun?

Thou thinkest perhaps to satisfy thyself, but thou canst never attain it.

Shouldst thou see all the things of this world, what were it but a vain sight?

Lift up thine eyes to God in the highest, and pray to him to pardon all thy sins.

Leave vain things to the vain, but be thou intent upon those things which God commandeth thee.

Shut thy door upon thee; and call unto thee *Jesus*, thy beloved. Stay with him in thy closet; for thou shalt not find so great peace any where else.

Hadst thou not gone abroad, and hearkened to idle rumours, thou mightest

the better have remained in peace; as long as thou delighteſt to hear novelties, thou muſt endure trouble of heart.

XVI. *Of Compunction of Heart.*

IF thou wilt make any progreſs, keep thyſelf in the fear of God, and uſe not too much liberty.

Keep all thy ſenſes under diſcipline, and give not thyſelf over to trifling mirth.

2. The levity of our minds, and want of concern for our faults, make us loſe the ſenſe of our inward ſtate, and often laugh when we have cauſe to weep.

There is no true liberty, nor right gladneſs, but in the fear of God, and a good conſcience.

Happy is he that can avoid all diſtracting impediments, and recollect himſelf in holy compunction.

Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burden his conſcience.

Reſiſt manfully: One cuſtom overcometh another.

3. Buſy not thyſelf in matters which appertain to others; neither trouble thyſelf with the affairs of thy betters.

Still

Still have an eye to thyſelf firſt, and be ſure to admoniſh thyſelf before any of thy friends.

If thou haſt not the favour of men, be not grieved at it; but grieve that thou doſt not carry thyſelf ſo warily and circumſpectly as becometh the ſervant of God.

It is often better and ſafer that a man hath not many conſolations in this life, eſpecially worldly ones. But that we have not any, or ſeldom, divine conſolations, is our own fault, becauſe we do not altogether forſake vain comforts.

4. Didſt thou oftner think of thy death, than of thy living long, there is no queſtion but thou wouldſt be more zealous to amend.

I believe thou wouldſt willingly undergo any labour, or ſorrow, or auſterity, if thou didſt conſider within thyſelf the pains of a future ſtate.

But becauſe theſe things enter not into the heart, and we ſtill love the things of the world, therefore we remain cold and ſlothful.

Miſerable thou art, whereſoever thou be, or whitherſoever thou turneſt, unleſs thou turn to God. Who

Who is in the beſt caſe? He who can ſuffer ſomething for God.

O brother, quit not thy hope of profiting in ſpiritual things: There is yet time, the hour is not yet paſt.

5. Why wilt thou defer thy good purpoſe? Ariſe, begin this inſtant, and ſay, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be ſtriving, now is the time to amend.

But unleſs thou doſt violence to thyſelf, thou ſhalt never get the victory over ſin.

XVII. *Of the Meditation of Death.*

THIS life will ſoon be at an end: Conſider therefore how thy affairs ſtand as to the next.

Man is here to-day; to-morrow he is ſoon forgotten.

Thou ſhouldſt ſo order thyſelf in all thy thoughts, and all thy actions, as if thou wert to die to-day.

Hadſt thou a clear conſcience, thou wouldſt not fear death. It were better to avoid ſin, than to fly death.

If thou art not prepared to-day, how wilt thou be to-morrow? To-

morrow is uncertain, and how knoweſt thou that thou ſhalt live till to-morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when we are ſo little the better?

Alas! Long life doth not always mend us; but often increaſeth guilt.

O that we had ſpent but one day well in this world!

3. When it is morning, think thou mayeſt die before night.

When evening comes, dare not to promiſe thyſelf the next morning.

Be therefore always in readineſs; and ſo live, that death may never take thee unprepared.

Many die ſuddenly, and when they look not for it; for "in ſuch an hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh." Matt. xxiv. 44.

When that laſt hour ſhall come, thou wilt have a far different opinion of thy whole life.

4. How wiſe and happy is he, that laboureth to be ſuch in his life, as he wiſheth to be found at the hour of his death!

Whilſt thou art in health, thou mayeſt do much good; but when thou

art

art ſick, I know not what thou wilt be able to do.

Few by ſickneſs grow better; and they who travel much are ſeldom ſanctified.

5. Truſt not in friends and kindred, neither put off the care of thy ſoul till hereafter; for men will ſooner forget thee, than thou art aware of.

If thou art not careful for thyſelf now, who will be careful for thee hereafter!

The time preſent is very precious; now is the day of ſalvation, now is the acceptable time.

But alas! That thou ſhouldeſt ſpend thy time no better here, where thou mighteſt purchaſe life eternal! The time will come, when thou ſhalt deſire one day or hour to amend in, and I cannot ſay it will be granted thee.

6. Ah, fool, why doſt thou think to live long, when thou canſt not promiſe to thyſelf one day!

How many have been deceived, and ſuddenly ſnatched away!

How often doſt thou hear, ſuch a man is ſlain, another is drowned, a third

has

has broke his neck with a fall; this man died eating, and that playing!

One perished by fire, another by sword, another of the plague, another was slain by thieves. Thus death is the end of all; and man's life suddenly passeth away like a shadow.

7. Who shall remember thee when thou art dead? Do, do now, my beloved, whatsoever thou art able to do: For thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall be after thy death.

Now, while thou hast time, lay up for thyself everlasting riches.

Think of nothing but the salvation of thy soul; care for nothing but the things of God.

8. Keep thyself as stranger and pilgrim upon earth, who hath nothing to do with the affairs of this world.

Keep thy heart free, and lifted up to God, because thou hast here no abiding city. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighs and tears, that after death thy spirit may happily pass to the Lord, Amen.

XVIII.

XVIII. *Of Judgment, and the puniſhment of Sin.*

IN all things remember the end, and how thou wilt be able to ſtand before that ſevere Judge, from whom nothing is hid; who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any excuſes: But will judge according to right.

O wretched and fooliſh ſinner, who ſometimes feared the contenance of an angry man; what anſwer wilt thou make to God, who knoweth all thy wickedneſs?

Why doſt thou not provide for thyſelf againſt that great day of judgment, when no man can excuſe or anſwer for another, but every one ſhall have enough to anſwer for himſelf?

2. What is it which that infenal fire feeds upon, but thy ſins?

The more thou ſpareſt thyſelf now, and followeſt the fleſh; ſo much the more hereafter ſhall be thy puniſhment, and thou ſtoweſt up greater fuel for the flame.

In what thing a man hath ſinned, in the ſame ſhall he be puniſhed.

There

There is no quiet, no comfort for the damned there. Here we have ſome intermiſſion of our labours, and enjoy the comfort of our friends.

Be now ſolicitous and ſorrowful becauſe of thy ſins, that at the day of judgment thou mayeſt be ſecure with the bleſſed.

For then ſhall the righteous ſtand with great boldneſs before ſuch as have vexed and oppreſſed them.

Then ſhall he ſtand to judge, who doth now humbly ſubmit himſelf to the judgment of others.

Then ſhall the poor and humble have great confidence; but the proud ſhall be compaſſed with fear on every ſide.

3. Then will it appear, that he was wiſe in this world, who had learned to be a fool and deſpiſed for Chriſt's ſake.

Then ſhall every affliction, patiently undergone, delight us; and the mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopped.

Then ſhall the devout rejoice, and the profane mourn.

Then ſhall he more rejoice that hath mortified his fleſh, than he that hath abounded in all pleaſure.

Then

Then ſhall the poor attire ſhine glorioufly, and the precious robes appear vile.

4. Suppoſe thou hadſt hitherto lived always in honour and delights; what would this avail thee, if thou wert to die this inſtant? All therefore is vanity, but to love God, and ſerve him only.

For he, that loveth God with all his heart, is neither afraid of death, nor judgment, nor hell.

XIX. *Of the zealous Amendment of our whole Life.*

WHEN one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once humbly proſtrate himſelf in prayer, and ſaid, O if I knew that I ſhould perſevere? He preſently heard within him an anſwer from God, which ſaid, If thou didſt know it, what wouldſt thou do? Do what thou wouldſt do then, and thou ſhalt be ſafe.

And being herewith comforted and ſtrengthened, he committed himſelf wholly to the will of God, and his anxiety ceaſed:

Neither

Neither had he any mind to ſearch curiouſly farther what ſhould befal him; but rather laboured to underſtand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accompliſhing of every good work.

2. Hope in the Lord, and do good, ſaith the prophet; ſo ſhalt thou inhabit the land, and thou ſhalt be fed.

One thing there is that draweth many back from a ſpiritual progreſs and diligent amendment; the hour of difficulty, or the labour of the combat.

But they improve moſt in virtue, that endeavour moſt to overcome thoſe things which are grievous and contrary to them.

For there a man improveth more and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himſelf and mortifieth himſelf in ſpirit.

3. Gather ſome profit to thy ſoul whereſoever thou be: ſo if thou ſeeſt or heareſt of any good examples, ſtir up thyſelf to the imitation thereof.

But if thou ſeeſt any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou doſt not the ſame. And, if at any time thou haſt done it, labour quickly to amend it.

4. Be

4. Be mindful of the profeſſion thou haſt made, and have always before thine eyes the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified.

Thou haſt good cauſe to be aſhamed, looking unto the life of Jeſus Chriſt, ſeeing thou haſt as yet no more endeavoured to conform thyſelf unto him, tho' thou haſt waſted a long time in the ways of God.

A religious perſon, that exerciſeth himſelf ſeriouſly and devoutly in the moſt holy life and paſſion of our Lord, ſhall there abundantly find whatſoever is neceſſary and profitable for him; neither ſhall he need ſeek any better thing out of Jeſus.

O if Jeſus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully ſhould we be inſtructed in all truth!

BOOK II. CHAP. I.

Of the Inward Life.

THE kingdom of God is within you, ſaith the Lord. Turn thee with

with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forſake this wretched world, and thy ſoul ſhall find reſt.

Learn to deſpiſe exterior things, and to give thyſelf to the interior, and thou ſhalt perceive the kingdom of God to come into thee. For the kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.

2. O faithful ſoul, make ready thy heart for this bridegroom, that he may vouchſafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee!

For he ſaith, if any man love me, he will keep my words, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him. Give therefore admittance unto Chriſt, and deny entrance to all others.

When thou haſt Chriſt, thou art rich, and he will ſuffice thee. He will be thy faithful helper in all things, ſo as thou ſhalt not need to truſt in men.

For men are ſoon changed, and quickly fail; but Chriſt remaineth for ever, and is with us even unto the end.

We ought not to put truſt in man, frail and mortal as he is, though he

be friendly, and ſerviceable; nor ſhould we be grieved although he croſs and oppoſe us.

They that to-day take thy part, to-morrow may be againſt thee, and ſo on the contrary; they often turn like the wind.

Put thy whole truſt in God, let him be thy fear and thy love: he will anſwer for thee, and do in all things what is beſt.

Thou haſt not here an abiding city; and whereſoever thou be,—thou art a ſtranger and pilgrim; neither ſhalt thou ever have reſt, unleſs thou be intimately united unto Chriſt.

4. Why doſt thou here gaze about, ſince this is not the place of thy reſt? Heaven ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to be looked upon as they forward thy journey thither.

All things paſs away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not unto them, leſt thou be entangled and periſh.

Let thy thoughts be on the Higheſt, and thy prayer directed unto Chriſt without ceaſing.

If thou canſt not contemplate on high and heavenly things, reſt thyſelf in the paſſion of Chriſt, and dwell willingly in his holy wounds.

For if thou fly devoutly unto the wounds and precious marks of the Lord Jeſus, thou ſhalt feel great comfort in tribulation; neither wilt thou regard being deſpiſed of men, and wilt eaſily bear words of detraction.

5. Chriſt was alſo deſpiſed of men, and in his greateſt neceſſity forſaken by his acquaintance and friends.

Chriſt choſe to ſuffer and be deſpiſed; and dareſt thou complain of any thing?

Chriſt had adverſaries and ſlanderers: and wilt thou have all men thy friends and benefactors?

How ſhall thy patience be crowned, if no adverſity happen unto thee?

If thou wilt ſuffer nothing, how wilt thou be the friend of Chriſt?

Suffer with Chriſt, and for Chriſt, if thou deſireſt to reign with Chriſt.

6. If thou hadſt but once entered into Jeſus, then wouldſt thou not be careful about thine own advantage or

diſadvantage, but would rather rejoice at ſlanders caſt upon thee; for the love of Jeſus maketh a man deſpiſe himſelf.

A lover of Jeſus, a true inward chriſtian, free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himſelf to God, and lift himſelf above himſelf.

7. He that reliſhes all things as they are, and not as they are eſteemed, is truly wiſe and taught by God.

He that can live inwardly, and make ſmall reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times, for the exerciſe of his devotion.

An interior man ſoon recollecteth himſelf, becauſe he is never wholly intent upon outward things.

He is not hindered by outward labour or buſineſs; but as things fall out, ſo he ſuiteth himſelf unto them.

He that hath well ordered and diſpoſed all things within, careth not for the perverſe carriage of men.

So much is a man hindered and diſtracted, by how much he cleaveth to outward things.

8. If all went well with thee, and if thou

thou wert well purified, all things would tend to thy good.

But therefore many things diſpleaſe and trouble thee, becauſe thou art not yet dead unto thyſelf, nor ſeparated from all earthly things.

Nothing ſo defileth and entangleth the heart of man, as the impure love of creatures.

II. *Of humble Submiſſion.*

MIND not much who is with thee, or who is againſt thee; but take care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doſt.

Keep a good conſcience, and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no man can hurt.

If thou canſt hold thy peace and ſuffer, without doubt thou ſhalt ſee the ſalvation of the Lord.

He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee; and therefore thou oughteſt to reſign thyſelf unto him.

It belongs to God to help, and deliver us from all ſhame. It is often profitable for the keeping us humble,

that others know and apprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himself for his faults, he easily pacifieth those that are offended with him.

God protecteth and delivereth the humble; unto the humble man he inclineth himself; unto the humble he giveth great grace; and after his humiliation he raiseth him unto glory

Unto the humble he revealeth his secrets, and sweetly draweth him unto himself.

The humble person, though he suffer shame, is yet in peace; for that he resteth in God, and not in the world.

Do not think that thou hast profited any thing, unless thou esteem thyself inferior to all.

III. *Of a good and peaceable Man.*

FIRST keep thyself in peace, and then mayest thou pacify others.

A peaceable man doth more good than a learned one.

A passionate man turneth good into evil, and easily believeth the worst.

A peaceable man turneth all things into good.

He that is in peace, is not ſuſpicious of any: But he that is diſcontented, is neither quiet himſelf, nor ſuffereth others to be quiet.

He often ſpeaketh that which he ought not ſpeak, and omitteth that which he ought to do. He conſidereth what others are bound to do: and neglects that which he is bound to do himſelf.

Firſt therefore have a careful zeal over thyſelf, and then ſhew thyſelf zealous for thy neighbour's good.

2. Thou knoweſt well how to excuſe thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuſes of others.

It were more juſt to accuſe thyſelf, and excuſe thy brother. If thou wilt be borne with, bear alſo with others.

Behold! how far thou art yet, from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, but one's ſelf. It is no great matter to live peaceably with the good and gentle; for every one willingly enjoyeth peace,

and loveth thoſe that are of his own mind:

But to be able to live peaceably with unquiet and perverſe men, or ſuch as croſs us, is a great grace.

3. Some they are, that keep themſelves in peace, and are in peace alſo with others.

And there are ſome, that neither are in peace themſelves, nor ſuffer others to be in peace; who are troubleſome to others, but always more troubleſome to themſelves.

And others there are, that keep themſelves in peace, and labour to bring others unto peace.

Our whole peace in this life conſiſting rather in humble *ſuffering*, than in not feeling adverſities.

He that knows beſt how to ſuffer, will beſt keep himſelf in peace. He is a conqueror of himſelf, a lord of the world, a friend of Chriſt, and an heir of heaven.

IV. *Of a pure Mind and ſimple Intention.*

SIMPLICITY and purity are the two wings by which a man is lifted above all earthly things.

Simplicity is in the intention: purity in the affection: ſimplicity tends to God; purity apprehends and taſtes him.

No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from inordinate affection.

If thou intend and ſeek nothing but the will of God and the good of thy neighbour, thou ſhalt enjoy internal liberty.

If thy heart were right, then every creature would be a looking-glaſs of life, and a book of holy doctrine.

There is no creature ſo little and abject, that repreſents not the goodneſs of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly pure, thou wouldſt ſee and underſtand all things without an impediment.

A pure heart penetrateth heaven and hell. Such as every one is inwardly, ſo he judgeth outwardly.

If

If there be joy in the world, ſurely a man of a pure heart poſſeſſeth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil conſcience feels it.

As iron put into the fire loſeth its ruſt, and becometh all bright like fire; ſo he that wholly turneth himſelf unto God, is purified from all ſin, and changed into the likeneſs of God.

3. When a man beginneth to grow luke-warm, then he is afaid of a little labour: But when he once beginneth to overcome himſelf, then he eſteemeth thoſe things light, which before ſeemed grievous unto him.

V. *Of the conſideration of one's Self.*

WE ſhould not truſt too much to ourſelves, becauſe we have often neither grace nor underſtanding.

There is but little light in us, and that we quickly loſe by negligence.

We reprehend ſmall things in others, and paſs over greater in ourſelves.

We quickly feel and weigh what we ſuffer from others, but we mind not what others ſuffer from us.

He

He that doth well, and rightly conſiders his own work, will find little cauſe to judge hardly of another.

2. The inward chriſtian preferreth the care of himſelf before all other cares.

He that diligently attendeth unto himſelf, eaſily holds his peace concerning others.

Thou wilt never be inwardly religious, unleſs thou paſs over other men's matters and look eſpecially to thyſelf.

If thou attend wholly unto God and thyſelf, thou wilt be little moved with whatſoever thou ſeeſt abroad.

Where art thou, when thou art not with thyſelf! and when thou haſt run over all, what haſt thou profited, if thou haſt neglected thyſelf?

If thou deſireſt peace of mind, thou muſt reject all other cares, and look only to thyſelf.

3. Thou ſhalt profit much if thou keep thyſelf free from all temporal cares.

Thou ſhalt greatly fail, if thou eſteem any thing of this world.

Let nothing be great, nothing high, nothing pleaſing to thee, but only GOD himſelf, or that which is of GOD.

Eſteem all comfort vain, which proceedeth from any creature. A ſoul that loveth God, deſpiſeth all things but God.

God alone, who is everlaſting, immenſe, filling all things, is the comfort of the ſoul, and the true joy of the heart.

VI. *Of the joy of a good Conſcience.*

THE glory of a good man is the teſtimony of a good conſcience.

Have a good conſcience, and thou ſhalt ever have joy.

Thou ſhalt reſt ſweetly, if thy heart condemn thee not. Never rejoice but when thou haſt done well.

Sinners have never true joy, nor feel inward peace; becauſe *There is no peace to the wicked*, ſaith the Lord.

2. To glory in tribulation, is no hard thing for him that loveth; for to glory ſo, is to glory in the croſs of our Lord.

That

That glory is ſhort, which is given and received from men. Sorrow always accompanieth the glory of the world.

The glory of the good is in their conſciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladneſs of the juſt is of God, and their joy is of the truth.

He enjoyeth great peace of mind, that careth neither for the praiſe nor for the diſpraiſe of men.

3. He will eaſily be content whoſe conſcience is pure.

Thou art not the more holy, though thou art praiſed; nor the more abject, though thou art diſpraiſed.

What thou art, thou art; neither canſt thou be ſaid to be greater than thou art in the ſight of God.

If thou conſidereſt what thou art within, thou wilt not care what men ſay of thee.

Man ſeeth the face, but God looketh into the heart.

Man conſidereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention.

To do always well, and to diſeſteem himſelf, is a ſign of an humble ſoul.

4. He that ſeeketh no witneſs for himſelf without, doth ſhew that he hath wholly committed himſelf unto God.

"For not he who commendeth himſelf is approved, ſaith St. Paul: But whom GOD commendeth."

To walk inwardly with God, and not to love any thing without, is the ſtate of a ſpiritual man.

VII. *Of the Love of* JESUS.

BLESSED is he that underſtandeth what it is to love JESUS, and to deſpiſe himſelf for JESUS.

Thou oughteſt to leave what thou haſt loved hitherto, for the ſake of him; for he will be loved alone.

The love of things created is deceitful and inconſtant; the love of Jeſus is faithful and conſtant.

He that cleaveth unto a creature ſhall fall when it falls; he that embraceth Jeſus, ſhall ſtand firmly for ever.

Love him, and keep him for thy friend, who, when all go away, will not forſake thee. Thou muſt one day be left of all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep cloſe to Jeſus, both in life and

and death, and commit thyſelf unto his faithfulneſs, who, when all fail, can alone help.

Thy beloved will not admit of a rival; but will have thy heart alone, and ſit like a king in his own throne.

Whatſoever affection thou repoſeſt in men out of Jeſus, is all no better than loſt.

Truſt not, nor lean upon a broken reed; for all fleſh is graſs, and all the glory thereof ſhall wither away.

3. Thou ſhalt quickly be deceived if thou regardeſt only the outward appearance of men.

If in them thou ſeekeſt comfort and profit, thou ſhalt often feel loſs.

If thou ſeekeſt Jeſus in all things, thou ſhalt ſurely find him.

If thou ſeekeſt thyſelf, thou ſhalt alſo find thyſelf, but to thy own deſtruction.

For if a man do not ſeek Jeſus, he doth more hurt to himſelf, than the world, and all his adverſaries could do.

VIII.

VIII. *Of a familiar friendſhip with Jeſus.*

WHEN Jeſus is preſent, all is well; but when he is abſent, every thing is hard.

When Jeſus ſpeaketh not inwardly, we have no true comfort: But if he ſpeak but one word, we feel much conſolation.

Did not Mary preſently riſe from the place where ſhe wept, when Martha ſaid unto her, "*The Maſter is come, and calleth for thee?*"

Happy the hour, when Jeſus calleth from tears to ſpiritual joy!

How dry and cold art thou without Jeſus! How fooliſh and vain, if thou deſireſt any thing out of him!

Is not this a greater loſs, than if thou ſhouldſt loſe the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Jeſus?

To be without Jeſus, is a grievous hell; and to be with him, a ſweet paradiſe.

If Jeſus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee.

He

He that findeth Jeſus, findeth a good treaſure, yea, a good above all goods: And he that loſeth Jeſus, loſeth too much, and more than the whole world.

He is moſt poor that liveth without Jeſus: and he is moſt rich that is well with him.

3. It is a great ſkill to know how to converſe with Jeſus, and great wiſdom to know and keep him.

Be humble and peaceable, and Jeſus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Jeſus will ſtay with thee.

Thou mayſt ſoon drive away Jeſus, if thou turneſt aſide to outward things. And if thou ſhouldſt drive him away, unto whom wilt thou fly? and what friend wilt thou ſeek?

Without a friend thou canſt not live well: and if Jeſus be not above all friends unto thee, thou ſhalt be very ſorrowful and deſolate.

Thou doſt therefore fooliſhly, if thou doſt truſt or rejoice in any other. It is better for thee to have all the world againſt thee, than Jeſus offended with thee.

Therefore, of all things that are dear to thee, let Jeſus alone be peculiarly thy beloved. Love all for Jeſus, but Jeſus for himſelf.

Jeſus Chriſt alone is to be beloved: who alone is faithful above all friends.

For him, and in him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee: pray to him for all theſe, that all may know and love him.

Never deſire to be commended, for that appertaineth unto God. Neither do thou deſire that the heart of any ſhould be ſet on thee; nor do thou ſet thy heart on any: but let Jeſus be in thee, and in every good man.

4 Be pure and free within, and entangle not thy heart with any creature. And truly, unleſs thou be prevented and drawn by his grace, thou ſhalt never attain to this, to forſake and caſt off all, that thou mayſt be united to him alone.

For when the grace of God cometh unto man, then he has power to do all things: and when that retires, he is poor and weak, and as it were, left only to affliction.

Yet in this thou oughteſt not to deſpair: but to reſign thyſelf to the will of God, and to bear all things that befal thee for the glory of Chriſt: for after winter followeth ſummer, and after a ſtorm a great calm.

IX. *Of the want of all Comfort.*

IT is not hard to deſpiſe human comfort when we have divine.

He rideth eaſily enough, whom the grace of God carrieth. And what marvel if he feel no burthen, who is borne up by the Almighty?

2. We are always willing to have ſomething for our comfort; and a man doth hardly put off himſelf.

The holy martyr St. Lawrence overcame the world, becauſe he deſpiſed whatſoever was delightſome in it; and, for the love of Chriſt, patiently ſuffered Sixtus to be taken from him, whom he moſt dearly loved.

He overcame therefore the love of man by the love of the Creator: and he rather choſe the divine good pleaſure, than human comfort.

See thou alſo learn to forſake thy intimate and beloved friend, for the love of God. Be not grieved when thou art forſaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length muſt be ſeparated from one another.

When a man truſteth in himſelf, he eaſily ſlideth into human comfort: But a true lover of Chriſt betakes not himſelf to human comfort, but rather ſuſtains hard exerciſes and great labour for Chriſt.

3. When therefore ſpiritual comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully: but know it is the gift of God, not thy deſert.

Be not puffed up, neither do thou preſume vainly: But be rather more humble for the gift, and more wary in all thy actions.

4. David, in the preſence of the divine grace, ſaid, "I ſaid in my proſperity, I ſhall never be removed." But, in the abſence of it, having experienced what was in himſelf, he adds, "Thou didſt turn thy face from me, and I was troubled."

Yet

Yet doth he not deſpair, but more earneſtly prayeth unto the Lord, and ſaith, "Then cried I unto thee, O Lord: and gat to my God right humbly."

Laſtly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witneſſeth that he was heard, ſaying, "The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity on me: the Lord is become my helper."

But wherein? "Thou haſt turned, ſaith he, my heavineſs into joy: thou haſt compaſſed me about with gladneſs."

5. Whereupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to truſt, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the only hope of heavenly grace?

For whether I enjoy the preſence of good men, or religious brethren, or faithful friends, or holy books, or excellent treatiſes, or ſweet ſongs and hymns, all theſe help little, and have little reliſh without the grace of God.

At ſuch a time there is no better remedy than patience, and renouncing my own will, according to the will of God.

Temptations going before, is wont to be a ſign of enſuing comfort.

And to thoſe that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promiſed. "He that ſhall overcome, (ſaith he,) I will give him to eat of the tree of life."

6. Divine comfort is given, that a man may be ſtronger to bear adverſity. There followeth temptation, leſt he ſhould grow proud thereof.

The devil ſleepeth not, neither is the fleſh as yet dead: therefore ceaſe not to prepare thyſelf to the battle, for on the right hand and on thy left, are enemies that never reſt.

X. *Of Thankfulneſs for the Grace of* GOD.

WHY ſeekeſt thou reſt, ſince thou art born to labour?

Diſpoſe thyſelf to patience, rather than to comfort; and to the bearing of the croſs, rather than to joy.

What worldly man would not willingly receive ſpiritual joy and comfort, if he could always have it? For ſpiritual comforts exceed all the delights of the world, and pleaſures of the fleſh.

2. False freedom of mind and trust in ourselves, are very contrary to heavenly visitations.

God doth well in giving thee consolation; but man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are not thankful to the Giver.

For grace ever attendeth him that is thankful; and from the proud shall be taken that which is given to the humble.

I willingly accept that grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and careful, and more ready to renounce myself.

Give unto God that which is God's, and ascribe unto thyself that which is thine own; that is, give thanks to God for his grace; and acknowledge that nothing is thine, but only sin, and the punishment due thereto.

3. Set thyself always in the lowest place, and the highest shall be given thee; for thou canst not be in the highest till thou hast been in the lowest.

The chief saints before God are the least in their own eyes: And how much

the more glorious, ſo much the more humble.

4. Be therefore thankful for the leaſt gift; ſo ſhalt thou receive greater. If thou conſidereſt the worth of the Giver, no gift will ſeem little, or of mean eſteem. For that is not little which is given by the moſt high God.

Yea, if he ſhould give puniſhment and ſtripes, we ought to be grateful; for he doth it always for our welfare, whatſoever he permitteth to befal us.

He that deſireth to keep the grace of God, let him be thankful for the grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary and humble, leſt he loſe it.

XI. *That there are few who love the Croſs of Chriſt.*

JESUS hath many lovers of his heavenly kingdom; but few bearers of his croſs.

He hath many deſirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abſtinence.

All

All deſire to rejoice with him, but few will ſuffer for him.

Many praiſe and bleſs him, as long as they receive comforts from him. But if he leave them but awhile, they fall into complaint, or dejection.

2. But they that love Jeſus, for Jeſus, bleſs him in all tribulation, as well as in the greateſt comfort.

And although he ſhould never give them comfort, yet they would ever praiſe him, and always give him thanks.

3. O how powerful is the pure love of Jeſus! But where may one be found that is willing to ſerve God *gratis?*

4. It is hard to find any one that is ſtript of the love of all earthly things.

For where is any one to be found that is indeed free from all affection to creatures?

If a man ſhould give all his ſubſtance, yet it is as nothing. And if he ſhould do great penances, yet are they but little. And if he ſhould attain to all knowledge, he is yet far off.

And if he ſhould be very fervent in devotion, yet there is wanting one thing, which is moſt neceſſary for him.

What

What is that? That when he hath done all which he knoweth ought to be done, he knoweth that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not think that a great thing, which others may think ſo: but according to truth let him affirm himſelf to be an unprofitable ſervant, as our Saviour hath ſaid, "When ye have done all things that are commanded you, ſay, We are unprofitable ſervants."

Yet no man richer, no man more powerful, no man more free, than he that can leave all things, and ſet himſelf in the loweſt place.

XII. *Of the royal Way of the holy Croſs.*

THIS ſpeech ſeemeth hard to many, "Renounce thyſelf, take up thy croſs, and follow Jeſus."

But it will be much harder to hear that word, "Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire."

This ſign of the croſs ſhall be in heaven, when our Lord ſhall come to Judgment. Then all the ſervants of the

the croſs ſhall draw near unto Chriſt the Judge with great confidence.

2. Why therefore feareſt thou to take up thy croſs, which leadeth to a kingdom?

In the croſs is ſalvation, in the croſs is life, in the croſs is protection againſt our enemies, in the croſs is heavenly ſweetneſs, in the croſs is ſtrength of mind, in the croſs is joy of ſpirit, in the croſs is the height of virtue, in the croſs is the perfection of holineſs.

There is no ſalvation of the ſoul, nor hope of everlaſting life, but in the croſs.

Take up therefore thy croſs, and follow Jeſus, and thou ſhalt go into life everlaſting.

He is gone before bearing his croſs, and is dead for thee on the croſs; that thou mayſt alſo bear thy croſs, and deſire to die on the croſs with him.

For if thou dieſt with him, thou ſhalt alſo live with him: and, if thou be his companion in pain, thou ſhalt be partaker with him in glory.

3. Behold in the croſs all doth conſiſt, and all lieth in our dying upon it: for there is no other way to life, and to

true

true inward peace, but the way of the holy croſs.

Go where thou wilt, ſeek whatſoever thou wilt, thou ſhalt not find a higher way above, nor a ſafer way below than the way of the holy croſs.

Diſpoſe all things according to thy will and judgment; yet thou ſhalt ever find, that thou muſt ſuffer ſomewhat, either willingly, or againſt thy will, and ſo thou ſhalt ever find the croſs

For either thou ſhalt feel pain in thy body, or in thy ſoul.

4. Sometimes thou ſhalt be tried of God, ſometimes thou ſhalt be exerciſed by thy neighbour; and often thou ſhalt be irkſome to thyſelf:

Neither canſt thou be delivered by any other remedy; but ſo long as it pleaſeth God, thou muſt bear it.

For God will have thee learn to ſuffer tribulation; and to ſubject thyſelf wholly to him.

No man hath ſo cordial a feeling of the paſſion of Chriſt, as he who hath ſuffered the like himſelf.

The croſs therefore is always ready, and every where waits for thee.

Thou

Thou canſt not eſcape it whitherſoever thou runneſt; for whereſoever thou goeſt, thou carrieſt thyſelf with thee, and ſhalt ever find thyſelf.

Both above and below, without and within, which way ſoever thou doſt turn thee, every where thou ſhalt find the croſs; and every where thou muſt have patience if thou wilt enjoy an everlaſting crown.

5. If thou bear the croſs willingly, it will bear thee. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou increaſeth thy load, and yet thou muſt bear it. If thou caſt away one croſs thou ſhalt find another, and perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Thinkeſt thou to eſcape that which no man could ever avoid? Which of the ſaints in the world was without croſſes?

Verily, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord was never one hour without ſuffering, ſo long as he lived. Chriſt (ſaith he) ought to ſuffer, and riſe again from the dead, and ſo enter into his glory.

And doſt thou ſeek any other way than his royal way, which is the way of the holy croſs?

7. In-

7. Indeed it is not of man to bear and love the croſs, to keep the body under, to fly honours, to ſuffer reproaches gladly, to deſpiſe himſelf, and to rejoice in being deſpiſed.

If thou conſidereſt thyſelf, thou art able to perform nothing of this. But if thou truſteth in the Lord, ſtrength ſhall be given thee from heaven, and the world and the fleſh ſhall be made ſubject to thy command.

Neither ſhalt thou fear the Devil, if thou art armed with faith.

8. Set therefore thyſelf like a faithful ſervant of Chriſt, to bear manfully the croſs of thy Lord.

Prepare thyſelf to bear adverſities; for ſo it will be with thee whereſoever thou be; and ſo ſurely thou wilt find it, whereſoever thou hideſt thyſelf.

Drink of the cup of the Lord gladly, if thou wilt be his friend. As for comforts, leave them to God; let him do therein as ſhall beſt pleaſe him.

Set thou thyſelf to ſuffer tribulations, and account them the greateſt comforts; for the ſufferings of this life are not worthy of the glory which is to come,

al-

altho' thou alone couldeſt ſuffer them all.

9. When thou ſhalt come to this, that tribulation ſhall be ſweet unto thee for Chriſt, then think it well with thee, for thou haſt found a paradiſe upon earth.

As long as it is grievous to thee to ſuffer, ſo long ſhalt thou be ill at eaſe, and the tribulation thou flieſt ſhall follow thee every where.

Although thou hadſt been wrapped into the third heaven with Paul, thou wouldſt not be ſecure from ſuffering. *I* (ſaith Jeſus) *will ſhew him how great things he muſt ſuffer for my name.*

It remaineth, therefore, that thou ſuffer, if thou wilt love Jeſus, and perpetually ſerve him.

10. O that thou wert worthy to ſuffer ſomething for the name of Jeſus! How great glory would it be to thee! How great edification alſo to thy neighbour! For all commend patience, tho' few are willing to ſuffer.

With great reaſon thou oughteſt to be willing to ſuffer a little for Chriſt, ſince many ſuffer far greater things for the world.

11. Know

11. Know for certain the more every one dieth to himſelf, the more he liveth to God. No man is fit to attain unto heavenly things, unleſs he ſubmit to ſuffer for Chriſt.

Nothing is more grateful unto God, nothing more wholeſome to thee, than to ſuffer willingly for Chriſt.

And if it were thy choice, thou ſhouldſt rather wiſh to ſuffer adverſities for Chriſt, than to enjoy many comforts; becauſe hereby thou ſhouldſt be more like Chriſt, and more conformable to all the ſaints.

For our proficiency conſiſteth not in many ſweetneſſes and comforts, but rather in ſuffering afflictions.

12. If any thing had been more profitable to the ſalvation of man than ſuffering, Chriſt ſurely would have ſhewn it by word and example.

But he plainly exhorteth all that follow him to the bearing of the croſs, and ſaith, "If any man will come after me, let him renounce himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me."

So that, when we have read and ſearched all, let this be the laſt conclu-

ſion,

ſion, that by many tribulations we muſt enter the kingdom of GOD.

BOOK III. CHAP. I.

I. *Of the inward Speech of Chriſt unto a faithful Soul.*

Chriſtian. I Will hear what the Lord God will ſpeak in me.

Bleſſed is the ſoul that heareth the Lord ſpeak in her, and receiveth from his mouth the word of comfort.

Bleſſed are thoſe ears that receive the whiſpers of the divine voice, and liſten not to the whiſperings of the world.

Bleſſed indeed are thoſe ears that hearken not to the voice which ſoundeth outwardly, but unto the truth which teacheth inwardly.

Bleſſed are the eyes which are ſhut to outward things, but open to thoſe that are internal. Bleſſed are they that delight to be at leiſure for God, and rid themſelves of all worldly impediments.

2. Conſider theſe things, my ſoul, and ſhut up the doors of thy ſenſual de-

fires, that thou mayeſt hear what the Lord God ſpeaketh in thee.

Chriſt. I am thy peace, thy life, and thy ſalvation. Keep thyſelf with me, and thou ſhalt find peace. Leave all tranſitory, and ſeek things everlaſting. What are all temporal things, but ſnares? and what do all creatures avail thee, if thou be forſaken by thy Creator?

Forſake therefore all earthly things; and labour to pleaſe thy Creator, and be faithful unto him, that thou mayeſt attain true happineſs.

II. *That Truth ſpeaketh inwardly, without noiſe of Words.*

Chriſtian. SPEAK, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.

I am thy ſervant, grant me underſtanding, that I may know thy teſtimonies.

Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth. Let thy ſpeech diſtil as the dew.

The children of Iſrael ſaid unto Moſes, *Speak thou unto us, and we will hear thee: Let not the Lord ſpeak unto us, leſt we die.*

Not

Not ſo, Lord, not ſo, I beſeech thee; but rather with the prophet Samuel, I humbly and earneſtly intreat, *Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.*

Let not Moſes ſpeak unto me, nor any of the prophets: but do thou rather ſpeak, O Lord God, the inſpirer and enlightener of all the prophets: for thou alone, without them, canſt perfectly inſtruct me; but they, without thee, can profit nothing.

They indeed, may ſound forth words, but they cannot give ſpirit. They ſpeak well; but if thou be ſilent, they inflame not the heart. They teach the letter, but Thou openeſt the ſenſe. They bring forth myſteries, but thou unlockeſt the meaning of them.

They declare thy commandments, but thou helpeſt to fulfil them.

They ſhew the way, but thou giveſt ſtrength to walk in it.

They work only outwardly, but thou inſtructeſt and enlighteneſt the heart.

They water, but thou giveſt the increaſe.

They make a noiſe with words; but thou giveſt to underſtand them.

3. Let not therefore Moſes ſpeak unto me, but thou, my Lord God, the everlaſting truth: leſt I die, and prove unfruitful, if I be warmed outwardly only, and not inflamed within.

Let not the word heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not obſerved, turn to my condemnation.

Speak, therefore, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth; for thou haſt the words of eternal life.

Speak unto me, to the comfort of my ſoul, and to the amendment of my whole life, and to thy praiſe, and glory, and everlaſting honour.

III. *That the Words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.*

Chriſt. SON, hear my words, words of the greateſt ſweetneſs, excelling all the knowledge of the philoſophers and wiſe men of this world.

My words are ſpirit and life, not to be weighed by the underſtanding of man.

They

They are to be heard with ſilence, and to be received with all humility and great affection.

Chriſtian. Bleſſed is the man whom thou ſhalt inſtruct, O Lord, and ſhalt teach thy law; that thou mayeſt give him reſt from the evil days, and that he be not deſtroyed upon earth.

2. *Chriſt.* I have taught the prophets from the beginning, and ceaſe not in theſe days to ſpeak to every one; but many are hardened, and deaf to my ſpeech.

Moſt men more willingly liſten to the world than to God; and follow ſooner the deſires of the fleſh than the will of God.

The world promiſeth temporal and ſmall things, and is ſerved with great eagerneſs: I promiſe high and eternal things, and the hearts of men are unmoved.

Who is he that ſerveth and obeyeth me, with ſuch care as the world and the lords thereof are ſerved with?

Bluſh therefore, ſlothful and complaining ſervant, that they are more eager for deſtruction, than thou for life.

They rejoice more in vanity, than thou in the truth.

And yet they are often fruſtrated of their hope; but my promiſe deceiveth none, nor ſendeth him away empty that truſteth in me.

What I have promiſed, I will give; I will fulfil what I have ſaid, to him that remains faithful in my love to the end.

I am the rewarder of all that are good, and try my ſervants with ſtrong trials.

3. Write my words in thy heart, and think diligently of them; for they will be very neceſſary in the time of temptation.

What thou underſtandeſt not when thou readeſt, thou ſhalt know in the day of viſitation.

I am wont to viſit my elect two ways; with temptation, and with comfort.

And I daily read two leſſons unto them; one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increaſe of virtues.

He that hath my words, and deſpiſeth them, hath him that ſhall judge him at the laſt day.

4. Chriſtian. O Lord my God, thou art to me whatſoever is good. Who am I, that I dare ſpeak unto thee? I am thy pooreſt ſervant, and a moſt vile worm, much poorer and contemptible than I can expreſs.

Yet, remember, O Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing.

Thou alone art good, juſt, and holy; thou canſt do all things; thou filleſt all things; only the proud thou ſendeſt empty away.

Remember thy mercies, and fill my heart with thy grace, thou who willeſt not that thy works ſhould be empty.

5. How can I bear myſelf, unleſs thou ſtrengtheneſt me with thy mercy and grace? Turn not thy face from me; delay not thy viſitation; take not away thy comfort, leſt my ſoul become as the thirſty land.

Lord, teach me to fulfil thy will, teach me to live worthily and humbly in thy ſight; for thou art my wiſdom, thou doſt truly know me, and didſt know me before the world was made, and before I was born in the world.

IV. *That we ought to live in Truth and Humility before God.*

Chriſt. SON, walk before me in truth, and ever ſeek me in ſimplicity of heart.

He that walketh before me in truth, ſhall be defended from evil; and the truth ſhall deliver him from ſeducers, and from the detractions of the wicked.

If the truth ſhall have made thee free, thou ſhalt be free indeed.

Chriſtian. Lord, it is true. According as thou ſaidſt, ſo I beſeech thee let it be with me; let thy truth teach me, and keep me, and bring me ſafe to a happy end.

Let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love; and I ſhall walk with thee in great freedom of heart.

2 *Chriſt.* I will teach thee thoſe things that are right and pleaſing in my ſight.

Think of thy ſins with great diſpleaſure and grief, and never eſteem thyſelf any thing for thy good works.

Thou

Thou art in very deed a ſinner; thou art ſubject to, and incumbered with many paſſions.

Of thyſelf thou always tendeſt to nothing; thou art quickly caſt down, quickly overcome, quickly troubled, quickly diſſolved.

Thou haſt nothing wherein thou canſt glory, but many things for which thou oughteſt to deſpiſe thyſelf; for thou art much weaker than thou art able to comprehend.

3. Make no account therefore of any thing that thou doſt.

Let nothing ſeem great, nothing precious and wonderful; let nothing ſeem worthy of eſtimation, nothing high, nothing truly praiſe-worthy and deſirable, but that which is everlaſting.

Let the eternal truth above all things pleaſe thee. Let thy own great unworthineſs always diſpleaſe thee.

Fear nothing, fly nothing ſo much as thy vices and ſins.

Some walk not ſincerely in my ſight; but will know my ſecrets, and underſtand the high things of God; neglecting themſelves and their own ſalvation.

Theſe

Theſe often, becauſe I reſiſt them, fall into great temptations and ſins.

4. Fear the judgments of God; dread the wrath of the Almighty. But diſcuſs not the works of the Higheſt. Search thine own iniquities, how much thou haſt offended, and how much thou haſt neglected. Some place their religion only in books, ſome in outward forms and ceremonies.

Some have me in their mouths, but little in their hearts.

There are others, that, being illuminated in their underſtandings, and purged in their affections, continually pant after things eternal; theſe perceive what the Spirit of Truth ſpeaketh in them.

Becauſe it teacheth them to deſpiſe earthly, and love heavenly things; to neglect the world, and all the day and night to deſire heaven.

V. *Of the wonderful Effects of Divine Love.*

Chriſtian. I Praiſe thee, O heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for that thou haſt vouchſafed to remember me a poor creature.

O Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, thanks be unto thee, who with thy comfort refreſheſt me, unworthy of all comfort.

I ever bleſs and glorify thee, with thy only begotten Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, for ever and ever.

O Lord God, the holy lover of my ſoul, when thou ſhalt come into my heart, all that is within me will rejoice.

Thou art my glory, and the joy of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But, becauſe I am ſtill weak in love, I have need to be ſtrengthened and comforted by thee. Viſit me therefore often, and inſtruct me with thy holy diſcipline.

Deliver me from evil paſſions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections: that being healed within, I may be made fit to love, ſtrong to ſuffer, and conſtant to perſevere.

3. *Chriſt.* Love is a great thing, which alone maketh every burden light, and beareth all the viciſſitudes of life.

For it carrieth a burden without a burden; and maketh every thing that is

bitter,

bitter, ſweet and ſavory. The love of Jeſus impelleth to do great things, and ſtirreth up continually to deſire greater perfection.

Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any earthly thing. Love will be free and looſe from all worldly affection, leſt its inward ſight be hindered, leſt it be entangled by any temporal proſperity, or ſubdued by adverſity.

Nothing is ſweeter than love, nothing is ſtronger, nothing higher, nothing more large, nothing more pleaſant, nothing fuller or better in heaven or in earth:

Becauſe love is born of God, and cannot reſt but in God, above all creatures.

4. He that loveth, flieth, runneth, and rejoiceth; he is free, and not bound.

He giveth all for all, and hath all in all: for he reſteth in the ſupreme One, from whom all good proceedeth.

He reſpecteth not the gifts, but turneth himſelf above all goods unto the Giver.

Love often knoweth no meaſure, but is inflamed above all meaſure. Love

Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above its strength; complaineth not of impossibility; for it thinketh all things possible.

It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to pass; whereas he that doth not love, fainteth and sinketh under them.

5. Love watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not. Being tired is not weary, straitened is not disturbed; but, like a lively flame it bursteth out aloft, and securely passeth through all. If any man loveth, he knoweth what this meaneth. The ardent affection of the soul crieth aloud in the ears of God, when it saith, *My God, my love, thou art wholly mine, and I am wholly thine.*

5. *Christian.* Enlarge me in love, that, with the inward mouth of my heart, I may taste how sweet it is to love, and to be melted and swim in thy love.

Let me be possessed by love, mounting above myself with excessive fervour and admiration. Let me sing the song of love, let me follow thee on high, my

my Beloved: let my ſoul die away in thy praiſe, rejoicing thro' love.

Let me love thee more than myſelf, and not myſelf but for thee, and all in thee that truly love thee, as the law of love commandeth, which ſhineth out from thee.

7. *Chriſt.* Love is ſwift, ſincere, pious, pleaſant, and delightful; ſtrong, patient, faithful, prudent, long-ſuffering, manly: and never ſeeking itſelf.

For where one ſeeketh himſelf, there he falleth from love.

Love is circumſpect, humble, and upright; not ſoft, nor light, nor attending unto vain things; but ſober, chaſte, conſtant, quiet, and guarded in all the ſenſes.

Love is ſubject and obedient to ſuperiors, vile and deſpicable to itſelf; devout and thankful unto God, truſting and hoping always in him.

8. He that is not ready to ſuffer all things, and to ſtand to the will of his Beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover. A lover ought to embrace willingly, all that is hard and diſtaſteful, for his Beloved.

VI. *Of a Proof of a true Lover.*

Chriſt. SON, thou art not yet a valiant and prudent lover.

Chriſtian. Wherefore, Lord?

Chriſt. Becauſe thou giveſt over thy undertaking for a ſmall difficulty, and too greedily ſeekeſt after comfort.

A valiant lover ſtandeth firmly in temptation, and giveth not credit to the crafty perſuaſions of the enemy.

As I pleaſe him in proſperity, I am not unpleaſant to him in adverſity.

2. A prudent lover conſidereth not ſo much the gift of his love, as the love of the giver. He regardeth the love more than the value, and valueth his beloved above all his gifts.

A generous lover reſteth not in the gift, but in me, above every gift.

3. Know that thy ancient enemy doth ever ſtrive to hinder thy deſire to good, and to divert thee from all religious exerciſes; to wit, from all devout memory of my paſſion, from the profitable remembrance of thy ſins, from the guard of thine own heart, and from the firm purpoſe of profiting in virtue.

He

He injecteth many evil thoughts, that he may cauſe a wearineſs in thee, to drive thee from prayer and holy reading.

Humble prayer is diſpleaſing unto him, and if he could, he would cauſe thee to ceaſe from receiving the ſacrament.

Truſt him not, nor care for him, altho' he ſhould often ſet ſnares for thee.

If he ſuggeſt evil thoughts unto thee, ſay unto him, "Away, unclean ſpirit; bluſh, miſerable wretch; thou art very unclean, that bringeth ſuch things to mine ears.

"Away from me, wicked deceiver, thou ſhalt have no part in me; but Jeſus ſhall be with me as a ſtrong warrior, and thou ſhalt ſtand confounded.

"Hold thy peace and be ſilent; I will hear thee no more, though thou ſhouldſt work me many troubles. The Lord is my light and my ſalvation: Whom ſhall I fear? Tho' hoſts of men riſe up againſt me, yet ſhall not my heart be afraid. The Lord is my Helper and Redeemer."

VII. *That Grace is to be guarded by Humility.*

Chriſt. THE way of man is not in his power, but it belongeth to God to comfort when he will, and how much he will, and whom he will; as ſhall pleaſe him, and no more.

They that are yet but novices, and unacquainted in the way of the Lord, unleſs they govern themſelves by the counſel of diſcreet perſons, may eaſily be deceived and overthrown.

2. And if they will rather follow their own judgment, than give credit to others that are experienced, the event will be dangerous.

Seldom thoſe that are ſelf-wiſe, ſuffer themſelves humbly to be governed by others.

Chriſtian. Shall I ſpeak unto my Lord, who am duſt and aſhes?

If I eſteem better of myſelf, behold thou ſtandeſt againſt me; and my iniquities bear true witneſs againſt me, neither can I contradict it.

But if I abaſe and know myſelf to be nothing, if I renounce all ſelf eſteem, and (as I am) account myſelf to be but duſt; thy grace will be favourable unto me, and thy light will be near my heart.

And all ſelf-eſteem, ſhall be ſwallowed up in the deep valley of my nothingneſs, and periſh everlaſtingly.

There thou ſheweſt myſelf unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come: For I am nothing, and I knew it not.

And if I be left to myſelf, behold I become all weakneſs. But if thou look-eſt upon me, I am made ſtrong.

And it is a great marvel, that I am ſuddenly lifted up, and ſo graciouſly embraced by thee, who by my own weight always ſink downward.

3. Thy love is the cauſe thereof, freely preventing me, and relieving me in ſo many neceſſities; preſerving me from many grievous dangers, and delivering me from innumerable evils.

For by inordinate loving myſelf, I loſt myſelf; and by ſeeking thee alone, and purely loving thee, I have found

both

both myſelf and thee; and by that love have more deeply brought myſelf to nothing.

For thou, O Lord, dealeſt with me above all deſert, above all that I dare hope or aſk.

4. Bleſſed be thou, my God; for altho' I be unworthy of any benefits, yet thy bounty, and thy infinite goodneſs, never ceaſe to do good even to the ungrateful, and them that are far from thee.

Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be thankful, humble, and holy; for thou art our power, and our ſtrength, and our ſalvation.

VIII. *All Things are to be referred to God, as to their laſt end.*

Chriſt. SON, I ought to be thy laſt end if thou deſireſt to be truly bleſſed.

By this intention thy affection ſhall be purified, which is often inordinately bent down to itſelf, and unto creatures.

For, if in any thing thou ſeekeſt thyſelf, thou ſoon falleſt into ſpiritual dryneſs,

Refer therefore all things unto me, for I am he that hath given all.

Conſider every thing as flowing from the higheſt good: And therefore all things are to be reduced unto me, as unto their original.

2. Out of me, as out of a living fountain, the little and the great, the poor and the rich, draw the water of life; and they that willingly and freely ſerve me, ſhall receive grace for grace.

But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any good that tends not to me, ſhall not be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but ſhall be many ways incumbered and ſtraightened.

Thou oughteſt therefore to aſcribe nothing of good unto thyſelf, nor attribute goodneſs unto any man; but give all unto God, without whom man hath nothing.

I have beſtowed all, and will that all be returned unto me again; and with great ſtrictneſs, I require thanks.

3 This is the truth that putteth to flight vain glory. And if true love enter in, there ſhall be no envy, nor

ſtrait-

ſtraitneſs of heart, neither ſhall there be any place for ſelf-love.

For divine love overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the ſoul.

If thou art truly wiſe, in me alone thou wilt rejoice, in me alone thou wilt hope: For none is good but God alone, who is to be praiſed above all things, and to be bleſſed in all.

IX. *What a ſweet thing it is to deſpiſe the World, and ſerve God.*

Chriſtian. NOW I will ſpeak again, O Lord, and will not be ſilent: I will ſay in the ears of my God, my Lord, and my King that is on high.

O how great is the abundance of thy goodneſs, O Lord, which thou haſt laid up for thoſe that fear thee!

But what art thou to them that love thee? What to them that ſerve thee with their whole heart?

Truly, unſpeakable is the ſweetneſs of contemplating thee, which thou beſtoweſt on them that love thee.

In this chiefly thou haſt ſhewed me the ſweetneſs of thy love: In that when I was not, thou madeſt me: And when

I went aſtray, afar off from thee, thou broughteſt me back again, that I might ſerve thee, and haſt commanded me to love thee.

2. O fountain of everlaſting love, what ſhall I ſay of thee? How can I forget thee, that haſt vouchſafed to remember me, even after I had pined away and periſhed?

Thou haſt ſhewed mercy to thy ſervant beyond all my expectation. Thou haſt exhibited thy favour and friendſhip beyond all my deſert.

What ſhall I return to thee for this favour? Is it much that I ſhould ſerve thee, whom all creatures are bound to ſerve?

It ought not to ſeem much unto me to ſerve thee; but this rather ſeemeth much and marvellous unto me, that thou vouchſafed to receive into thy ſervice one ſo poor and unworthy, and to join him with thy beloved ſervants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I have, and whereby I ſerve thee. And yet, contrary-wiſe, thou rather ſerveſt me than I thee.

Behold,

Behold, heaven and earth, which thou haſt created for the ſervice of man, are all ready at hand, and do daily perform whatſoever thou doſt command.

And this is little: Thou haſt alſo appointed the angels to the ſervice of man.

But that which excelleth all this is, that thou thyſelf haſt vouchſafed to ſerve man, and promiſed to give thyſelf unto him.

4. What ſhall I give thee for all theſe thouſands of benefits? Would I could ſerve thee all the days of my life! Would I were able, at leaſt for one day, to do thee worthy ſervice!

Verily, thou art worthy of all ſervice, of all honour, and everlaſting praiſe.

Verily, thou art my Lord, and I thy poor ſervant, that am bound to ſerve thee with all my might, neither ought I ever to be weary of praiſing thee.

This I wiſh to do, this I deſire; and whatſoever is wanting unto me vouchſafe, I beſeech thee, to ſupply.

X. *The Deſires of our Hearts are to be examined.*

Chriſt. SON, thou muſt learn many things, which thou haſt not yet well learned.

Chriſtian. What are thoſe, Lord?

Chriſt. That thou frame thy deſires wholly according to my pleaſure: And be not a lover of thy ſelf, but a zealous follower of my will.

Thy deſires often inflame thee, and that vehemently; but conſider whether thou art moved rather for my honour, or for thy own profit.

If I be the cauſe, thou wilt be well content, howſoever I ſhall ordain:

But if there lurk in thee any ſelf-ſeeking, behold this is it that hindereth thee, and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou lean not too much upon any deſire conceived without aſking my counſel; leſt afterward it repent thee, and thou diſlikeſt what before pleaſed thee, and which thou zealouſly deſired as the beſt.

For every affection, that ſeemeth good, is not preſently to be followed;

nor

nor every affection, that at firſt ſeemed evil, to be avoided.

It is expedient to uſe a reſtraint even in good deſires and endeavours, leſt by importunity of deſire thou incurreſt diſtraction of mind, and by the want of ſelf government be a ſcandal to others; or, being gainſayed by others, thou be ſuddenly troubled and fall.

But thou oughteſt to uſe violence, and reſiſt manfully thy ſenſual appetites, and reſpect not what the fleſh would or would not; but rather to labour, that even perforce it be ſubject to the ſpirit.

Thou duſt, learn to obey. Thou earth and clay, learn to humble thyſelf, to bow down beneath the feet of all men. Learn to break thine own will, and to yield thyſelf to all ſubjection.

3. Be zealous againſt thyſelf, and ſuffer not pride to live in thee.

Shew thyſelf ſo lowly, ſuch a little child, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as the dirt of the ſtreets under their feet.

Vain man, what haſt thou to complain of? Vain ſinner, what canſt thou anſwer to them who reproach thee, who haſt

haſt ſo often offended God, and ſo many times deſerved hell? But mine eye hath ſpared thee, becauſe thy ſoul was precious in my ſight.

That thou mighteſt know my love, and always remain thankful for my benefits.

And that thou mighteſt continually ſtudy true ſubjection and humility, and patiently endure to be deſpiſed.

XI. *We muſt conſider the ſacred judgments of God, leſt we be exalted on account of our good deeds.*

Chriſtian. THOU thundereſt forth thy judgments over me, O Lord; thou ſhakeſt all my bones with fear and trembling, and my ſoul is ſore afraid.

I ſtand aſtoniſhed, when I conſider that the heavens are not pure in thy ſight.

If thou haſt found wickedneſs in angels, and haſt not pardoned them, what ſhall become of me? Stars fell from heaven: And am I, who am duſt, proud?

2. There is therefore no ſanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdraweſt thine hand. No wiſdom availeth, if thou ceaſeſt to govern. No ſtrength helpeth, if thou leave to defend. No chaſtity is ſecure, if thou doſt not protect it. No vigilance profits, if thy ſacred watchfulneſs be not preſent.

For, if we be left, we ſink and periſh: But, if thou viſiteſt us, we are raiſed up and live.

We are inconſtant, but by thee we are eſtabliſhed; we grow cold, but by thee we are inflamed.

3. O how meanly and humbly ought I to think of myſelf! How nothing ought I to eſteem it, if I ſeem to have any good!

O Lord, with what profound humility I ought to ſubmit myſelf to thy inſcrutable judgments; where I find myſelf to be a nothing, a very nothing! O unmeaſurable height! O unpaſſable ſea, where I find myſelf to be nothing, how altogether nothing! Where then is the hiding-place of glory? Where is the confidence I once conceived of my own virtue?

All

All vain-glorying is ſwallowed up in the depths of thy judgments over me.

4. What is all fleſh in thy ſight? Shall the clay glory againſt him that frameth it?

How can he be lifted up with vain words, whoſe heart is truly ſubject to God?

All the world cannot lift him up, whom the truth hath ſubjected unto itſelf; neither ſhall he be moved with the tongues of all his praiſers, that hath ſettled his whole hope upon God.

For as for them that ſpeak, behold they are all nothing; they ſhall paſs away as doth the ſound of their words; but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

XII. *How we are to be affected, and what we are to ſay in every thing which we deſire.*

Chriſt. SON, ſay thus, in every thing; O Lord, if it be pleaſing to thee, let this be thus:

Lord, if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name.

Lord,

Lord, if thou ſeeſt it expedient for me, and knoweſt it to be profitable, then grant me to uſe this unto thy honour:

But if thou knoweſt it will be hurtful unto me, and not profitable to the health of my ſoul, take away this deſire from me:

For every deſire proceedeth not from the Holy Ghoſt, though it ſeemeth unto man right and good.

It is hard to judge rightly, whether a good ſpirit, or the contrary, incline thee to deſire this or that, or whether thou art moved by thine own ſpirit.

Many art deceived in the end, who at firſt ſeemed to be led by a good ſpirit.

2. Always therefore, whatſoever ſeemeth deſirable to thee, let it be deſired and prayed for in the fear of God, with humility of heart. And above all, thou oughteſt to reſign thyſelf, and to commit the whole unto Me, and ſay,

"Lord, thou knoweſt what is beſt, let this or that be done as thou pleaſeſt.

Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt.

Deal

Deal with me as thou thinkeſt good, and as beſt pleaſeth thee, and as is moſt for thy honour.

Set me where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will.

I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again, which way ſoever thou pleaſeſt.

Behold, I am thy ſervant, prepared for all things: For I deſire not to live unto myſelf, but unto thee: And O that I could do it worthily and perfectly!

3 Grant me thy Grace, O moſt gracious Jeſus, that it may be with me, and continue with me unto the end

Grant me always to deſire and will that which is moſt acceptable unto thee, and beſt pleaſeth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will ever follow thine, and agree perfectly with it.

Let my will and nill be all one with thine, and let me not be able to will or nill any thing elſe, but what thou willeſt or nilleſt.

4. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the world, and for thy ſake

love

love to be contemned, and not to be known in this world.

Grant that above all things which can be desired, I may rest in thee, may quiet my heart in thee.

Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the only rest; out of thee all things are troublesome, and unquiet.

In this very peace, that is in thee, the one chief eternal Good, may I sleep and rest. AMEN."

XIII. *True Comfort is to be sought in God alone.*

MY Soul, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight, but in God the comforter of the poor, and the helper of the humble.

Wait awhile, O my soul, wait the divine promises; and thou shalt have abundance of all good things. Use temporal things; desire eternal.

Thou canst not be satisfied with any temporal good, because thou art not created to enjoy them.

Although thou hadst all created good, yet wouldst thou not be happy; but in

God

God that hath created all things, thy whole happineſs conſiſteth.

Vain and ſhort is all human comfort. Bleſſed and real is that comfort, which is received inwardly from the truth.

A devout man every where carrieth with him Jeſus his comforter, and ſaith unto him, "Be preſent with me, Lord Jeſus, in every place and time."

Let this be my comfort, to be willing to want all human comfort.

And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will be unto me as the greateſt comfort: For thou wilt not be angry always, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

XIV. *That all our care is to be caſt on God.*

Chriſt. SON, ſuffer me to do with thee what I pleaſe; I know what is expedient for thee.

Thou thinkeſt like a man, thou judgeſt in many things as human affection perſuadeſt thee.

Chriſtian. Lord, what thou ſayeſt is true. Thy care for me is greater than all the care that I can take for myſelf.

For

For he ſtandeth very totteringly, that caſteth not his whole care upon thee.

Lord, ſo that my will may remain right and firm towards thee, do with me whatſoever ſhall pleaſe thee.

For it cannot but be good, whatſoever thou doſt with me.

2. If it be thy will I ſhould be in darkneſs, be thou bleſſed; and if it be thy will I ſhould be in light, be thou again bleſſed.

If thou vouchſafeſt to comfort me, be thou bleſſed; and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou equally bleſſed.

Chriſt. Son, ſuch muſt be thy diſpoſition, if thou wilt walk with me. Thou muſt be as ready to ſuffer as to rejoice. Thou oughteſt to be as willing to be poor and needy, as full and rich.

3. *Chriſtian.* Lord, I willingly ſuffer for thee, whatſoever thy pleaſure is ſhall befal me.

I will receive indifferently from thy hand, good and evil, ſweet and bitter, delightful and ſorrowful, and give thee thanks for all that befalleth me.

Keep me from all ſin, and I will neither fear death nor hell.

So thou doſt not for ever caſt me from thee, nor blot me out of the book of life, what tribulation ſoever befalleth me ſhall not hurt me.

XV. *Of ſuffering Injuries; and who is proved to be truly patient.*

Chriſt. WHAT is it thou ſayeſt, ſon? Ceaſe to complain, conſidering my paſſion, and that of my other ſaints.

Thou haſt not yet reſiſted unto blood.

Do not ſay, I cannot ſuffer theſe things at the hand of ſuch a perſon, nor ought I to ſuffer ſuch things; for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with thoſe things which I never thought of; but of another I will willingly ſuffer as proper occaſions of ſufferings ſhall offer.

Such a thought is fooliſh, it conſidereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it ſhall be crowned; but rather weigheth the perſons and the injuries offered.

2. He is not truly patient, that will not ſuffer but as much at he thinketh good, and by whom he lifteth.

But

But the truly patient man mindeth not by whom he is exercised, whether by his superior, or some of his equals, or by his inferior; whether by a good and holy man, or by a perverse and unworthy person.

But indifferently from all creatures how much soever, or how often soever any adversity befalleth him, he taketh all thankfully from the hands of God, and esteemeth it great gain.

Seeing nothing how little soever, so it be suffered for God, shall pass without its reward from Him.

3. Be thou therefore prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have the victory.

Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience.

If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned: But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently.

Without labour there is no coming to rest, nor without fighting can victory be obtained.

4. *Christian.* Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature.

Thou knoweſt, that I can ſuffer but little, and that I am quickly diſmayed, when a ſmall adverſity ariſeth.

Let every exerciſe of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcome for thy name; for to ſuffer and to be troubled for thy ſake is very profitable for my ſoul.

I will confeſs againſt me my unrighteouſneſs; I will confeſs unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities.

It is often a ſmall matter that dejecteth and grieveth me. I purpoſe to act with courage; but when a ſmall temptation cometh, it bringeth me into great ſtraits.

It is ſometimes a very trifle from whence great temptations proceed. And whilſt I think myſelf ſomewhat ſafe, when I leaſt expect it, I find myſelf ſometimes overcome with a ſmall blaſt.

5. Behold, therefore, Lord, my low eſtate, and my frailty, every way known unto thee.

Have mercy on me, and deliver me out of the mire, that I ſtick not faſt therein, and that I may not be caſt down altogether.

6. O

6. O mighty God of Iſrael, the zealous lover of faithful ſouls, let it pleaſe thee to conſider the labour and ſorrow of thy ſervant, and aſſiſt him in all, whatſoever he undertaketh.

Strengthen me with heavenly ſtrength, leſt the old man, the miſerable fleſh, not yet fully ſubject to the Spirit, prevail.

XVI. *We are to reſt in God above all his gifts and benefits.*

Chriſtian. ABOVE all things, and in all things, O my ſoul, thou ſhalt ever reſt in the Lord! for he is the everlaſting reſt of the ſaints.

Grant me, O moſt loving Jeſus, to reſt in thee above all creatures:

Above all health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and ſubtilty, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladneſs, above all hope and promiſe, above all deſert and deſire;

Above all gifts and preſents that thou canſt impart unto us: Above all joy and triumph, that the mind of man can receive and feel:

Laſtly, above angels and archangels, and above all the hoſt of heaven, above all viſible and inviſible things, and above all that thou are not, O my God.

2. For Thou, my Lord God, art beſt above all. Thou alone art moſt high, Thou alone moſt powerful, Thou alone moſt full and ſufficient: Thou alone moſt ſweet and over flowing with comfort. Thou alone moſt lovely and loving. Thou alone moſt noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things are together, and moſt perfectly, and ever have been and ſhall be:

And therefore it is too little, whatſoever thou beſtoweſt on me beſides thyſelf, or revealeſt unto me of thyſelf, or promiſeſt, whilſt thou art not ſeen and fully obtained:

For ſurely my heart cannot truly reſt, unleſs it reſt in thee, and ſurmount all gifts and creatures whatſoever.

3. O my beloved bridegroom, Jeſus Chriſt, the moſt pure lover, the governor of all creatures! O that I had the wings of true liberty, that I might fly away, and reſt in thee!

O when

O when ſhall it be granted me, in quietneſs of mind, to ſee how ſweet thou art, my Lord God!

When ſhall I fully gather up myſelf into thee, that by reaſon of my love to thee I may not feel myſelf, but thee alone, above all ſenſe or meaſure, in a manner not known unto every one?

4. O Jeſus, the brightneſs of the eternal glory, thou comfort of the baniſhed ſoul, with thee is my tongue without a voice, and my ſilence ſpeaketh unto thee.

How long doth my Lord delay to come? Let him come unto me, his poor ſervant, and make me glad. Let him put forth his hand, and deliver me from all trouble.

Come, O come! for without thee I ſhall have no joyful hour; for thou art my joy, and without thee my table is empty.

A wretched creature I am until thou comforteſt me with the light of thy preſence, and ſetteſt me at liberty.

5. Let others ſeek what they pleaſe inſtead of thee; but for me, nothing elſe doth, or ſhall delight me, but thou

only, my God, my hope, my everlaſting ſalvation.

I will not hold my peace nor ceaſe to pray, until thy grace returneth, and thou ſpeakeſt inwardly unto me.

Chriſt. Behold, I am here; behold, I come unto thee, becauſe thou haſt called upon me. Thy tears and the diſtreſs of thy ſoul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee.

Chriſtian. Lord, I have called thee, and have deſired to enjoy thee, being ready to caſt away all things for thee. For thou firſt haſt ſtirred me up that I might ſeek thee.

Bleſſed be thou, therefore, O Lord, that haſt ſhewed thy goodneſs to thy ſervant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy ſervant more to ſay before thee, but greatly to humble himſelf in thy ſight, and be always mindful of his own iniquity and vileneſs?

For there is none like unto thee in all that is wonderful in heaven and earth.

Thy

Thy works are very good, thy judgments true, and by thy providence all things are governed.

Praiſe, therefore, and glory, be unto thee, O Wiſdom of the Father! Let my mouth, my ſoul, and all creatures together, praiſe and bleſs thee.

XVII. *Of the Remembrance of the many Benefits of God.*

Chriſtian. OPEN, O Lord, my heart in thy law, and teach me to walk in thy commandments.

Grant me to underſtand thy will, and remember thy benefits, that henceforward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. But I know and confeſs, that I am not able to give thee due thanks for the leaſt of thy favours.

I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy benefits: And when I conſider thy bounty, the greatneſs thereof maketh my ſpirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our ſouls and bodies, and whatſoever we poſſeſs outwardly or inwardly, naturally or ſupernaturally, are thy benefits, and ſpeak thee bountiful, merciful, and good,

from

from whom we have received all good things.

Altho' one have received more, another leſs; all notwithſtanding are thine, and without thee even the leaſt cannot be had.

He that hath received greater, cannot extol himſelf above others; for he is greater and better, that aſcribeth leaſt unto himſelf, and is more humble and devout in rendering thanks.

And he that eſteemeth himſelf vileſt of all men, is fitter to receive greater bleſſings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to repine nor envy them that have greater ſtore; but attend rather unto thee, and highly praiſe thy goodneſs, who beſtoweſt thy gifts ſo bountifully, ſo freely, and ſo willingly, without reſpect of perſons.

All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praiſed.

Thou knoweſt what is fit to be given to every man, and why one hath leſs and another more. It is not ours, but thine to judge, who doth exactly know what is meet for every one.

4. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoice him that loveth thee, and acknowledgeth thy benefits, as thy will in him, and the good pleasure of thy eternal appointment.

With this he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would be as willing to be the least, as another is to be the greatest.

He is as peaceable and contented in the last, as in the first place.

He is as willing to be despised and contemned, and to be of no esteem or account, as to be preferred in honour above all others, and to be greater in the world.

For thy will, and the love of thy glory, ought to be preferred above all things;

And to comfort him more, and please him better than all the benefits which either he hath received or may receive.

XVIII. *Of four things that bring much peace.*

Christ. SON, now will I teach thee the way of peace and true liberty. Endeavour to do rather the will of

of another than thine own. Ever chuſe rather to have leſs than more.

Always ſeek the loweſt place, and to be beneath every one. Continually wiſh and pray that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee.

Behold, ſuch a man entereth into the bonds of peace and quietneſs.

2. *Chriſtian.* Lord, this thy ſhort ſpeech containeth much perfection.

Thou who canſt do all things, and ever loveſt the profiting of my ſoul, increaſe in me thy grace, that I may fulfil thy works, and work out my own ſalvation.

My Lord God, be not far from me; my God, conſider and help me; for ſundry thoughts have riſen up againſt me, afflicting my ſoul.

How ſhall I paſs through them without hurt? How ſhall I utterly break them?

Chriſt. I will go before thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth. I will open the doors of the priſon, and reveal unto thee hidden ſecrets.

Chriſtian. Do, Lord, as thou ſayeſt; and let all evil thoughts fly before thy face.

face. This is my hope, my only comfort, to fly unto thee in every tribulation; to truſt in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

3 Enlighten me, O good Jeſus, with a clear, ſhining, inward light, and drive away all darkneſs from the habitation of my heart.

Repreſs my wandering thoughts, and drive away thoſe temptations which violently aſſault me.

Fight ſtrongly for me, and vanquiſh theſe evil beaſts, theſe enticing luſts; that ſo peace may be obtained by thy power, and abundance of thy praiſe found in the holy court of a pure conſcience.

Command the winds and the tempeſts; ſay unto the ſea, Be ſtill; and to the North wind, Blow not; and there ſhall be a great calm.

Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may ſhine upon the earth: for I am as the earth, without form, and void, until thou enlighteneſt me.

Pour out thy grace from above, let thy heavenly dew diſtill upon my heart.

Sup-

Supply ſtreams of devotion to water the face of the earth, that it may bring forth good and excellent fruit.

Lift up my mind, which is preſſed down by the weight of my ſins. Draw up my whole deſire to heavenly things, that having taſted the ſweetneſs of ſupernatural happineſs, it may be irkſome to me even to think of earthly vanities.

4. Snatch me, and deliver me from all the unlaſting comfort of creatures; for no created thing can fully comfort and quiet my deſire.

Join me unto thee with an inſeparable band of love; for thou alone doſt ſatisfy him that loveth thee, and without thee all things are frivolous.

XIX. *Of avoiding curious Enquiry into the Life of others.*

Chriſt. SON, be not curious; trouble not thyſelf with idle cares.

What is this or that to thee? Follow thou me. For what is it to thee, whether this man be ſuch or no? Whether this man do or ſpeak this or that?

Thou ſhalt not need to anſwer for others, but ſhalt give account of thyſelf.

Be-

Behold, I know every one, and ſee all things that are under the ſun, and underſtand how it is with every one, what he thinks, what he deſires, and at what his intention aims.

All things therefore ought to be committed unto me; but do thou keep thyſelf in peace, and let him that acts, act as he will.

Whatſoever he ſhall have done or ſaid, ſhall fall upon himſelf; for he cannot deceive me.

2. Be not careful for the ſhadow of a great name, or for the friendſhip of many; nor for the affection of particular men: For theſe things diſtract and greatly darken the heart.

I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my ſecrets unto thee, if thou didſt diligently obſerve my coming, and open the door of thy heart unto me.

Be careful and watch in prayer, and humble thyſelf in all things.

XX. *Wherein firm peace of heart and true profiting conſiſteth.*

Chriſt. SON, I have ſaid, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give

give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

All desire peace, but all care not for those things that appertain to peace.

My peace is with the humble and meek of heart: thy peace doth consist in much patience. If thou wilt hear me and follow my voice, thou mayest enjoy much peace.

Christian. What then shall I do, Lord?

Christ. In every thing attend unto thyself, what thou doest, and what thou sayest, and direct thy whole attention unto this, that thou mayest please me alone, and desire nothing besides me.

Of the sayings and doings of others, judge not rashly, neither do thou intangle thyself with things not committed unto thee: And doing thus, thou shalt be little or seldom troubled.

Yet do not esteem highly of thyself, or account thyself to be especially beloved, if thou be in great devotion and sweetness; for the profiting and perfection of a man consists not in these things.

2. *Christian.* Wherein then, Lord?

Christ.

Chriſt. In offering thyſelf with thy whole heart unto the Will of God;

So that thou keepeſt one and the ſame even countenance with thankſgiving, both in proſperity and adverſity, weighing all in an equal balance.

If thou prepareſt thy heart to ſuffer, and doſt not juſtify thyſelf, as though thou oughteſt not to ſuffer theſe ſo great afflictions, but juſtifieſt me in whatſoever I appoint, and praiſeſt my holy name; then thou walkeſt in the true and right way of peace.

And if thou attaineſt to the full contempt of thyſelf, then ſhalt thou enjoy abundance of peace.

XXI. *Of the excellent liberty, which humble prayer ſooner gaineth than reading.*

Chriſtian. LORD, it is the work of a perfect man never to ſlacken his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and to paſs without care among many cares; not like a dull ſluggard; but by a free mind, adhering to no creature with inordinate affection.

2. I beſeech thee, my moſt gracious God, preſerve me from the cares of this life, leſt I be entangled thereby: and from the many neceſſities of the body, leſt I ſhould be caught by pleaſure: And from whatſoever is an obſtacle to the ſoul, leſt broken with troubles, I ſhould be overthrown.

3. O my God, who art ineffable ſweetneſs, embitter unto me all comfort, which draws me away from the love of eternal things by the hope of preſent delight.

Let me not be overcome, O Lord, let me not be overcome by fleſh and blood. Let not the world and the ſhort glory thereof deceive me.

Let not the devil and his ſubtilty ſupplant me.

Give me ſtrength to reſiſt, patience to ſuffer, and conſtancy to perſevere.

Give me, inſtead of the comforts of the world, the unction of thy Spirit; and for carnal love, pour into my ſoul the love of thy name.

Herein, I beſeech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may fall into no extreme.

XXII.

XXII. *That Self-love hindereth our attainment of the ſupreme love.*

Chriſt. SON, thou oughteſt to give all for all, and to retain nothing of thyſelf. Know, that the love of thy own will doth hurt thee more than any thing in the world.

According to the love and affection thou beareſt to it, every thing cleaves unto thee more or leſs. If thy love be pure, thou ſhalt not be in bondage to any thing.

Covet not that which thou mayeſt not have. Be not willing to have that which may deprive thee of inward liberty.

It is ſtrange that thou committeſt not thyſelf wholly unto me, from the bottom of thy heart, with all things that thou canſt deſire and have.

2. Why doſt thou conſume thyſelf with vain grief? Why art thou tired with needleſs cares? Stand to my will, and thou ſhalt ſuffer no detriment.

If thou ſeekeſt this or that, and wouldeſt be here or there, to enjoy

thy own will and pleaſure; thou ſhalt never be quiet, nor free from care:

For in every thing ſomewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be ſome that will croſs thee.

3. It availeth thee not to multiply outward things, but to deſpiſe them and utterly root them out of thy heart.

Unleſs thou ſtandeſt ſtedfaſt in me, thou mayeſt change, but not better thyſelf.

For when occaſion of change happens, and is embraced, thou ſhalt find not only thoſe things which thou ſoughteſt to fly, but a great deal more.

4. *Chriſtian.* Strengthen me, O God, by the grace of thy Holy Spirit.

Give me to be ſtrengthened in my inward man, and to empty my heart of all uncomfortable care:

Not to be drawn away with the deſire of any thing, either mean or precious; but to look upon all things as paſſing away, and myſelf as paſſing away together with them.

5. Grant me, O Lord, heavenly wiſdom, that I may learn above all things to ſeek and find thee; above all things to reliſh thee, and to love thee:

And to think of all other things as they are, according to the diſpoſal of thy wiſdom.

XXIII. *How we ought to call upon God, and bleſs him in Tribulation.*

Chriſtian. BLESSED, O Lord, be thy name for ever, who art pleaſed that this temptation and tribulation ſhould come upon me.

I cannot fly it; but muſt needs fly to thee, that thou mayeſt help me, and turn it to my good.

Lord, I am now afflicted. I am much troubled with this preſent ſuffering.

And now, dear Father, what ſhall I ſay? - I am in a ſtrait; ſave me from this hour?

Yet therefore came I unto this hour, that thou mayeſt be glorified, when I ſhall have been brought very low, and then delivered by thee.

Let it pleaſe thee, Lord, to deliver me; for poor wretch that I am, what can I do, and whither ſhall I go without thee?

Grant me patience, Lord, even at

this time alſo. Help me, my God; and then I will not fear, how grievouſly ſoever I be afflicted.

2. And now in this my trouble, what ſhall I ſay? Lord, thy will be done: I have deſerved to be afflicted.

Surely I ought to bear it: and O that I could bear it with patience, until the tempeſt be paſſed over, and it becomes calm!

But thy hand is able to take away this temptation from me, and to aſſuage the violence thereof, that I utterly ſink not under it, as often heretofore thou haſt done unto me, O my God, my merciful God.

And how much the more hard it is to me, ſo much the more eaſy is this change to the right hand of the Moſt High.

XXIV. *Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.*

Chriſt. SON, I am the Lord that giveth ſtrength in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when it is not well with thee.

This

This is that which moſt of all hindereth heavenly conſolation, that thou art ſlow in turning thyſelf unto prayer.

For before thou doſt earneſtly pray unto me, thou ſeekeſt in the mean while many comforts, and trieſt to refreſh thyſelf with outward things.

And hence it comes to paſs that all doth little profit thee, until thou conſidereſt, that I am he who delivers thoſe that truſt in me: That out of me there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counſel, nor laſting remedy.

But now, having recovered breath after the tempeſt, gather ſtrength again in the light of my mercies; for I am at hand to repair all, not only entirely, but alſo abundantly.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiſed and performeth not?

Where is thy faith? Be firm and conſtant. Take courage, and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time.

Wait, wait for me, I will come and heal thee. Let not thy heart be troubled,

neither let it fear. Believe in me, and put thy truſt in my mercy.

When thou thinkeſt thyſelf fartheſt off from me, oftentimes I am neareſt unto thee. When thou judgeſt that almoſt all is loſt, then often is the greateſt opportunity of improvement.

That which I have given, I can take away: and reſtore it when I pleaſe.

5. When I give it, it is mine; when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine; for mine is every good and perfect gift.

If I ſend any croſs, repine not, nor let thy heart fail: I can quickly ſuccour thee, and turn all thy heavineſs into joy.

Nevertheleſs I am righteous, and greatly to be praiſed, when I deal thus with thee.

As my Father hath loved me, I alſo love you, ſaid I unto my beloved diſciples: Whom I ſent not to temporal joys, but to great conflicts; not to honours, but to contempts; not to idleneſs; but to labours; not to reſt, but to bring forth much fruit with patience.

My ſon, remember theſe words.

XXV.

XXV. *Of the Contempt of all Creatures, in order to find out the Creator.*

Chriſtian. LORD, I ſtand in need of yet greater grace, if I am to attain to that ſtate wherein no man nor any creature may be a hinderance unto me.

For as long as any thing detains me, I cannot freely take my flight unto thee.

What is more quiet than a ſingle eye? And what more free than he that deſireth nothing upon earth?

And unleſs a man be free from the affections of all creatures, he cannot freely attend unto divine things.

Long ſhall he be little, and lie groveling below, that eſteemeth any thing great, but the one infinite and eternal Good. For whatſoever is not God, is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing.

Chriſt. Son, thou canſt not poſſeſs perfect liberty, unleſs thou wholly renounce thyſelf.

All who are lovers of themſelves are fettered in bondage, full of deſires, curious

curious wanderers, ſeeking ſelf-indulgence, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt; but often deviſing and framing that which ſhall not ſtand.

For all that is not of God ſhall periſh.

Keep this ſhort and perfect ſaying, Forſake all, and thou ſhalt find all: Leave deſire, and thou ſhalt find reſt.

Conſider this well; and when thou haſt fulfilled it, thou ſhalt underſtand all things.

2. *Chriſtian.* Lord, that is not one day's work; yea, in this ſhort word is contained all perfection.

Chriſt. Son, thou muſt not go back, nor ſtraightways be dejected, when thou heareſt the ways of the perfect; but rather be ſtirred up to higher things, and at leaſt deſire and ſigh after them.

I would thou wert come to this, that thou wert no longer a lover of thyſelf, but thou didſt ſtand merely at my beck.

Then thou wouldſt pleaſe me, and all thy life would paſs away in joy and peace.

Thou haſt yet many things to forſake; which unleſs thou wholly reſigneſt up unto me, thou ſhalt not attain that which thou deſireſt.

I counſel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt become rich: that is, heavenly wiſdom, which treadeth under foot all earthly things.

Caſt away earthly wiſdom, and all ſtudy to pleaſe others or thyſelf.

He that is wiſe, and well inſtructed, ſtandeth faſt, not heeding what he feels in himſelf, but that the whole intention of his mind may tend to the right end.

For thus he may continue one and the ſelf-ſame, and unſhaken in the midſt of many various events, directing continually the ſingle eye of his intention unto me.

3. And the purer the eye of the intention is, the more ſteadily doth he paſs through various ſtorms.

But in many things the eye of a pure intention waxeth dim, for it quickly looketh upon any delightſome object that occurs.

And it is rare to find one that is wholly free from all blemiſh of ſelf-ſeeking.

So

So the Jews of old came to Bethany to Martha and Mary, not for Jesus alone, but to see Lazarus also.

The eye of the intention therefore is to be purged, that it may be single and right, directed unto me, beyond the manifold earthly objects that come between.

XXVI. *That God is sweet above all things; and in all things, to him that loveth.*

Christ an. MY God, and my all! What would I have more, and what greater happiness can I desire? O sweet and pleasing word! But to him that loveth the word; not the world, nor those things that are in the world.

My God, and my all! Enough is said to him that understandeth; and to him that loveth, it is pleasant to repeat it often.

For when thou art present, all things please: But when thou art absent, all things disgust. Thou givest quiet of heart, and much peace, and pleasant joy.

Thou

Thou makeſt us think well of all things, and praiſe thee in all things; neither can any thing pleaſe long without thee.

But that any thing may be pleaſant, thy grace muſt be preſent, and it muſt be ſeaſoned with the ſweetneſs of thy wiſdom.

2. What is not taſteful unto him who taſteth thee? And him who delighteth not in thee, what can delight?

3. O thou everlaſting light, ſurpaſſing all created lights, dart the beams of thy greatneſs from above, piercing the moſt inward parts of my heart.

Purify, rejoice, and enliven my ſpirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with abundance of joy and triumph.

O when will that bleſſed hour come, when I ſhall be filled with thy preſence, and thou be unto me all in all!

As long as this is not granted me, I ſhall not have full joy. Alas, the kingdom of my ſoul is not yet in peace.

4. But thou that ruleſt the raging of the ſea, and ſtilleſt the waves thereof when they ariſe, ariſe and help me:

Scatter

Scatter the people that delight in war, deſtroy them in thy might.

Diſplay thy greatneſs, and let thy right hand be glorified; for there is no other hope nor refuge for me, but in thee, my Lord God.

XXVII. *Of a pure and entire Reſignation of ourſelves for the obtaining freedom of heart.*

Chriſt. SON, forſake thyſelf, and thou ſhalt find me.

Stand without chuſing any thing, and without ſeeking to have any thing as thine own. Reſign thyſelf, without reſuming thy claim.

Chriſtian. Lord, how often ſhall I reſign myſelf? And wherein ſhall I forſake myſelf?

Chriſt. Always, and every hour, as well in little things as in great; I except nothing, but require that thou be naked and void of all things.

Otherwiſe how canſt thou be mine, and I thine, unleſs both within and without thou art free from all ſelf-will?

2. Some reſign themſelves, but with ſome exception; for they put not their whole

whole truſt in God, and therefore they ſtudy how to provide for themſelves.

Some alſo at firſt offer all; but afterwards being aſſaulted with temptation, return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forward in virtue.

Theſe ſhall not attain to the true liberty of purity of heart, nor to the favour of my ſweeteſt familiarity, unleſs they firſt make an entire reſignation, and a daily oblation of themſelves unto me.

3. I have often ſaid unto thee, and now again I ſay the ſame; forſake thyſelf, reſign thyſelf, and thou ſhalt enjoy much inward peace. Give all for all: ſeek nothing, require back nothing: Abide purely and with a firm confidence in me, and then thou ſhalt enjoy me.

Thou ſhalt be free in heart, and darkneſs ſhall not have any power over thee.

Let this be thy prayer, let this be thy deſire, that being ſtript of all ſelfiſhneſs, thou mayeſt follow naked the naked Jeſus, and, dying to thyſelf, mayeſt live eternally with me.

XXVIII. *Of the good Government of ourſelves in outward things, and of recourſe to God in danger.*

Chriſt. SON, thou oughteſt with all diligence to endeavour, that in every place and action of buſineſs, thou be inwardly free, and maſter of thyſelf, and that things be under thee, and not thou under them.

That thou mayeſt be lord of thy actions, not a ſervant or a hireling; but rather a freeman, and a true Hebrew, enjoying the liberty of the ſons of God:

Who ſtand above the things that are preſent, and view the things which are eternal: Who look on tranſitory things with the left eye, and with the right behold the things of heaven.

Whom temporal things cannot draw to cleave unto them; but they rather draw temporal things to ſerve them, in ſuch a way as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creator of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remaineſt ſtedfaſt in all events, and doſt not weigh by the outward

ward appearance, nor with a carnal eye, the things which thou ſeeſt and heareſt; but preſently in every affair doſt enter with Moſes into the tabernacle, to aſk counſel of the Lord, thou ſhalt hear the divine oracle, and return inſtructed concerning many things both preſent and to come.

Always fly to the cloſet of thy heart, earneſtly craving the divine favour.

For the Scripture teſtifieth, that therefore were Joſhua and the children of Iſrael deceived by the Gibeonites, becauſe they aſked not counſel at the mouth of the Lord.

Son, always commit thy cauſe to me: I will diſpoſe well of it in due time.

Wait for my ordering of it, and thou ſhalt find it will be for thy good.

Chriſtian. Lord, I moſt willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can avail little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered myſelf with all readineſs of mind to thy good pleaſure!

3. *Chriſt.* Son, a man often earneſtly labours for what he deſireth; and

when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind.

For men's affections do not long continue fixed on one thing.

It is therefore no ſmall thing for a man to forſake himſelf, even in the ſmalleſt things.

4. The true profiting of a man conſiſteth in the denying of himſelf.

But the old enemy ceaſeth at no time from tempting, but day and night layeth grievous ſnares, if haply he may caſt the unwary into them.

Therefore watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

XXIX. *That Man hath no good of himſelf, nor any thing whereof he can glory.*

Chriſtian. LORD, what is man that thou art mindful of him; or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him? What hath man deſerved, that thou ſhouldeſt give him thy grace?

Lord, what cauſe have I to complain, if thou doſt not that which I deſire?

Surely,

Surely, Lord, I am no thing, I can do nothing, I have nothing that is good of myself; but in all things I am defective, and do ever tend to nothing.

And unless thou help and inwardly instruct me, I become altogether cold and dissipated.

2. But thou, O Lord, art always the same, and endurest for ever; always good, just, and holy; doing all things well, justly, and holily, and disposing all things with wisdom.

But I that am more ready to go backward than forward, do not ever continue in one estate; for seven times are passed over me.

Yet it is soon better with me, when it so pleaseth thee, and when thou vouchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand.

For thou alone canst help me without the aid of man, and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be no more changed; but my heart shall be turned to thee alone, and there shall rest.

3. Thanks be unto thee, from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me.

But I am mere vanity, and nothing in thy ſight, an inconſtant and weak man.

Wherefore then can I glory? Or for what do I deſire to be eſteemed?

For nothing? But this is moſt vain.

The true glory, and holy rejoicing, is for a man to glory in thee, and not in himſelf. To rejoice in thy name, and not in his own virtue: Nor to delight in any creature, but in thee.

Praiſed be thy name, not mine: Magnified be thy work, not mine.

Let thy holy name be bleſſed; but to me let no part of men's praiſe be given.

Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In thee will I glory and rejoice all the day long: But as for myſelf, I will not glory but in my infirmities.

4. Let the Jews ſeek honour one of another; I will deſire that which is from God only.

For all human glory, all temporal honour, all worldly highneſs, is vanity and folly.

O my truth, my mercy, my God, moſt bleſſed Trinity, to thee alone be praiſe,

praiſe, honour, power, and glory, for evermore.

XXX. *That our peace is not to be placed in men.*

Chriſt. SON, if thou placeſt thy peace in any one becauſe he thinketh like thee, and liveth with thee, thou ſhalt be unſtable and entangled.

But if thou haſt recourſe unto the ever-living and eternal Truth, a friend going from thee, or dying, ſhall not grieve thee.

The love of thy friend ought to be grounded in me; and for me is he to be loved, whoſoever he be whom thou thinkeſt well of, and who is dear to thee in this life.

No friendſhip can avail, or continue without me; neither is that love true and pure, which is not knit by me.

Thou oughteſt to be ſo dead to ſuch affections towards men, that thou ſhouldſt wiſh to be without all friendſhip purely human.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himſelf, hindereth God's grace from coming unto him.

For the grace of the Holy Spirit ever ſeeketh an humble heart.

When thou caſteſt thine eyes on creatures, the ſight of thy Creator, is taken from thee.

Learn to overcome thyſelf in all things for the love of thy Creator; and then thou ſhalt be able to attain to divine knowledge.

How little ſoever the thing be, if it be loved and regarded inordinately, it defileth the ſoul, and hindereth the enjoyment of the ſupreme good.

XXXI. *Againſt vain Knowledge.*

Chriſt. SON, let not the fair ſpeeches and ſubtle ſayings of men move thee: For the kingdom of God conſiſteth not in word, but in power.

Labour to mortify thy ſins; for that will profit thee more than the knowledge of many difficult queſtions.

2. When thou haſt read and knoweſt many things, thou muſt ever return to one principle.

I am he that teacheth man knowledge, and giveth unto babes a more clear

clear understanding, than can be taught by man.

He to whom I speak, shall quickly be wise, and he shall profit much in the spirit.

Woe be to them, that enquire many curious things of men, and little mind the way how to serve me.

The time will come, when the Master of Masters shall appear, Christ the Lord of angels, to hear the lesson of all, that is, to examine the conscience of every one.

And then he will search Jerusalem with a candle: And the hidden things of darkness shall be laid open, and the arguing of men's tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that teacheth without the noise of words, without the confusion of opinions.

I am he that teacheth to despise earthly things, to disdain things present, to seek the everlasting, to relish things eternal, to fly honours, to suffer injuries, to place all hope in me, to desire nothing out of me, and above all things ardently to love me.

I am within, the teacher of truth, the ſearcher of the heart, the diſcerner of the thoughts, the promoter of good actions, diſtributing to every one as I judge meet.

XXXII. *Of putting our truſt in God, when we are evil-ſpoken of.*

Chriſt. SON, ſtand firm, and put thy truſt in me: For what are words but words? They fly thro' the air but hurt not a ſtone.

If thou be guilty, ſee that thou be willing to amend thyſelf: If thou be innocent, ſuffer this willingly for the ſake of God.

It is but a ſmall matter to ſuffer ſometimes a few words, if thou haſt not yet the courage to endure hard ſtripes.

Give diligent ear to my words, and thou ſhalt little regard ten thouſand words ſpoken by men.

2. *Chriſtian.* O Lord God, thou juſt Judge, ſtrong and patient, thou who knoweſt the frailty and wickedneſs of man, be thou my ſtrength, and my whole truſt; for my own conſcience ſufficeth me not.

Thou

Thou knoweſt that which I know not: and therefore, in every reproof, I ought to have humbled myſelf, and to have borne meekly.

Vouchſafe mercifully to pardon me as often as I have failed herein, and give me grace to bear it better hereafter.

For thy abundant mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of pardon, than my fancied juſtice for my defence, ſince I cannot ſee to the bottom of my conſcience.

Altho' I know nothing by myſelf, yet I cannot hereby juſtify myſelf, for without thy mercy no man living ſhall be juſtified in thy ſight.

XXXIII. *Of eternity and the ſhortneſs of this Life.*

Chriſtian. O Moſt bleſſed manſion of the heavenly city! O moſt clear day of eternity, which night obſcureth not, but the higheſt truth ever enlighteneth! A day of continual joy, of perpetual quietneſs, and never changing into a contrary ſtate!

O that

O that that day would once appear, and all theſe temporal things be at an end.

To the ſaints above, it ſhineth with everlaſting brightneſs; but to thoſe that are pilgrims upon earth, it appeareth only afar off, and thro' a glaſs.

O good Jeſus, when ſhall I ſtand to behold thee! When ſhall I contemplate the glory of thy kingdom! When wilt thou be unto me all in all?

O when ſhall I be with thee in thy kingdom, which thou haſt prepared for thy beloved, from all eternity!

2. Comfort my baniſhment, aſſuage my ſorrow; for my whole deſire ſigheth after thee.

My God, be not far from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy ſervant.

Caſt forth thy lightnings, and diſperſe them, ſhoot out thine arrows and conſume all the imaginations of the enemy.

Gather in, call home my ſenſes unto thee; make me forget all the things of this world: Grant me to caſt away ſpeedily the imaginations of wickedneſs.

Succour

Succour me, O thou, the everlasting Truth, that no vanity may move me.

Come, heavenly sweetness, and let all impurity fly before thee.

Pardon me also, and mercifully forgive, as often as I think upon any thing besides thee in prayer.

I truly confess, that I am wont to be subject to many distractions.

For sometimes I am not there where I stand or sit; but I am rather there, whither my thoughts carry me.

Where my thoughts are, there am I.

But blessed is that man, that for thee, O Lord, dismisseth all creatures, violently resisteth nature, and thro' fervour of spirit crucifieth the lusts of the flesh, that so with a serene conscience he may offer pure prayer unto thee, and be meet to be admitted into the angelical choirs, all earthly things both outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

XXXIV.

XXXIV. *Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those who fight valiantly.*

Christ. SON, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting bliss to be given thee from above, open thy heart wide, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole soul.

Give most ardent thanks to the heavenly goodness, that dealeth with thee so favourably, visiteth thee mercifully, stirreth thee up fervently, sustaineth thee powerfully, lest, thro' thy own weight, thou shouldst fall down to the things of the earth.

Neither dost thou obtain this by thine own thought or endeavour, but by the mere condescension of heavenly grace and divine favour:

To the end that thou mayest make a farther progress in holiness and humility, and prepare thyself for future battles:

And that thou mayest cleave unto me with the whole affection of thy heart, and serve me with a fervent desire.

2. Aſk not that which is delightful and profitable unto thee; but that which is acceptable to me, and for my honour.

For, if thou judgeſt aright, thou oughteſt to prefer and follow my appointment, rather than thine own deſire, or any deſired thing. I know thy deſire, and have heard thy frequent groans.

Thou wouldſt now enjoy the everlaſting habitation; and thy heavenly country, repleniſhed with all joy, now delights thee.

But that hour is not yet come: As yet there is another time, to wit, a time of war, a time of labour and trial.

Thou deſireſt to be filled with the ſupreme good, but thou canſt not attain it for the preſent.

I am the ſupreme good: Patiently wait for me, until the kingdom of God come.

3. Now therefore be humbly obedient unto all, and regard not who ſaid or commanded this;

But

But take great heed, that whether thy ſuperior, inferior, or thine equal, require any thing of thee, or do inſinuate their deſire, thou take it all in good part, and endeavour to fulfil it with a ſincere will.

Let one ſeek this, another that: Let him glory in this, the other in that, and be praiſed a thouſand times; but do thou neither rejoice in this nor in that, but in the contempt of thyſelf, and in my good pleaſure and honour alone.

This art thou to wiſh; that whether it be by thy life, or by thy death, God may always be glorified in thee.

XXXV. *How a perſon in a ſtate of affliction ought to give up himſelf into the hands of God.*

Chriſtian. LORD God, holy Father, be thou bleſſed both now and for evermore; becauſe, as thou willeſt, ſo it is done, and what thou doſt is good.

Let thy ſervant rejoice in thee, not in himſelf, nor in any thing elſe; for thou alone art the true gladneſs, thou

art

art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honour, O Lord.

What hath thy ſervant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any merit of his?

Thine is all that thou haſt given, and whatſoever thou haſt made.

I am poor, and in labour from my youth: And ſometimes my ſoul is ſorrowful even unto tears: Sometimes alſo it is troubled, by reaſon of the evils which hang over my head.

2. I long after the joy of peace, I earneſtly crave the peace of thy children, that are led by thee in the light of thy comfort.

If thou giveſt peace, if thou poureſt into my heart holy joy; the ſoul of thy ſervant ſhall be full of gladneſs, and ſhall become devout in thy praiſe:

O righteous Father, and ever to be praiſed, the hour is come that thy ſervant is to be tried. Behold, dear Father, meet it is that in this hour thy ſervant ſuffer ſomething for thy ſake.

O Father, evermore be honoured; the hour is come, which from all eternity thou didſt foreknow ſhould come;

that

that for a ſhort time thy ſervant ſhould outwardly be oppreſſed, but inwardly live for ever with thee.

That he ſhould be a little deſpiſed, humbled, and made abject in the ſight of men; that he may riſe again with the morning of the new light, and be glorified in heaven.

Holy Father, thou haſt ſo appointed it; and it is fulfilled, which thyſelf haſt commanded.

3. It is a favour to thy friend, that he may ſuffer and be afflicted in the world for the love of thee, how often ſoever, and by whomſoever, thou permitteſt it to fall upon him. Nothing cometh to paſs on earth without thy counſel, without thy providence, or without a cauſe.

It is good for me, Lord, that thou haſt afflicted me, that I may learn thy righteous judgments, and caſt away all haughtineſs of heart, and preſumption.

It is profitable to me, that ſhame hath covered my face, that I may rather ſeek to thee for comfort than to men.

4. I have

4. I have learned alſo to dread thy unſearchable judgments, who afflicted the juſt with the wicked, but not without equity and juſtice.

There is none under heaven that can comfort me, but thou, my Lord God, the heavenly phyſician of ſouls, that ſtrikeſt and healeſt, bringeſt down to hell, and bringeſt back again.

Let thy correction be upon me, and let thy rod inſtruct me.

5. Behold, dear Father, I am in thy hands; I bow myſelf under the rod of thy correction:

Strike my back and my neck, that my perverſeneſs may be conformed to thy will.

Make me a holy and humble diſciple of thine, (as thou art wont to do,) that I may be ready at every beck of thy pleaſure.

I commend myſelf and all that is mine unto thee, to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here than hereafter.

Thou knoweſt every thing, and there is nothing in the conſcience of Man hidden from thee.

Before things are done, thou knoweſt that they will come to paſs; and haſt no need that any ſhould teach thee, or admoniſh thee of thoſe things which are done on earth.

Thou knoweſt what is expedient for my profiting, and how fit tribulation is to ſcour off the ruſt of my ſins.

Do with me according to thy good pleaſure, and diſdain me not for my ſinful life, better and more clearly known to none than to thee alone.

6. Grant me, O Lord, to know that which ought to be known, to love that which ought to be loved:

To praiſe that which pleaſeth thee moſt, to eſteem that which is precious unto thee, to deſpiſe that which is contemptible in thy ſight.

Suffer me not to judge according to the ſight of the outward eyes, nor give ſentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant men:

But to diſcern inviſible and ſpiritual things with a true judgment, and above all things, ever to ſearch after thy good will and pleaſure.

XXXVI.

XXXVI. *That a Man ought to eſteem himſelf unworthy of any Comfort.*

Chriſtian. LORD, I am not worthy of any comfort, nor any ſpiritual viſitation. And therefore thou dealeſt juſtly with me, when thou leaveſt me poor and deſolate.

For though I could ſhed a ſea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort.

For alas, I deſerve nothing but to be ſcourged and puniſhed, in that I have grievouſly offended thee, and have ſinned greatly in many things.

But thou, O merciful God, who willeſt not that any ſhould periſh, to ſhew the riches of thy goodneſs, vouchſafeſt to comfort thy ſervant above the manner of men. For thy comforts are not like the words of men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou ſhouldeſt beſtow any heavenly comforts upon me?

I remember not that I have done any good; but have been always prone to ſin, and ſlow to amendment.

This is true, and I cannot deny it: If I ſhould ſay otherwiſe, thou wouldſt ſtand

againſt me, and there would be none to defend me.

What have I deſerved, but hell and everlaſting fire?

I confeſs in very truth, that I am worthy of all ſcorn and contempt, and it is not fit that I ſhould be numbered among thy ſaints.

3. What ſhall I ſay, guilty as I am, and full of confuſion? I have nothing to ſay, but this: I have ſinned; Lord I have ſinned; have mercy on me, pardon me:

Suffer me a little that I may vent my grief, before I go into the land of darkneſs, a land covered with the ſhadow of death.

What doſt thou ſo much require of a guilty and miſerable ſinner, as that he be contrite, and humble himſelf for his offences?

Of true contrition ariſeth hope of forgiveneſs; the favour of God, which was loſt, is recovered; man is preſerved from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent ſoul meet together with a holy kiſs.

4. Humble contrition for ſin is an acceptable ſacrifice unto thee, O Lord

favouring

ſavouring much ſweeter in thy preſence, than the perfume of frankincenſe.

This is alſo the pleaſant ointment, which thou wouldſt ſhould be poured upon thy ſacred feet. For thou never deſpiſeſt a contrite heart.

XXXVII. *Of the different Motions of Nature and Grace.*

Chriſt. SON, mark diligently the motions of nature and grace, for they move in a very ſubtle manner; and they cannot be diſcerned but by him that is ſpiritually enlightened.

All men indeed pretend ſome good in their words and deeds; and therefore under the ſhew of good, many are deceived.

Nature is crafty, and ſeduceth, entangleth, and deceiveth many, and always propoſeth herſelf for her end:

But grace walketh in ſimplicity, uſeth no deceit, and doth all things purely for God's ſake, in whom alſo ſhe finally reſteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die, or be kept down, nor be overcome,

nor be ſubject to any, nor be ſubdued:

But grace ſtudieth ſelf-mortification, reſiſteth ſenſuality, ſeeketh to be ſubject, is willing to be kept under, and will not uſe her own liberty.

She loveth to be kept under diſcipline, and deſireth not to rule any, but always to live and remain wholly ſubject to God, and for God is ready humbly to obey all men.

Nature ſtriveth for her own advantage, and conſidereth what profit ſhe may reap by another:

But grace conſidereth not what is profitable and advantageous unto herſelf, but rather what is profitable to many.

Nature willingly receiveth honour and reſpect. But grace faithfully attributeth all honour and glory unto God.

3 Nature feareth ſhame and contempt:

But grace rejoiceth to ſuffer reproach for the name of Jeſus.

Nature loveth eaſe and bodily reſt:

But grace cannot be idle, but willingly embraceth labour.

Nature

Nature ſeeketh to have thoſe things that are curious and beautiful, and abhorreth that which is mean or coarſe:

But grace delighteth in plain and humble things, deſpiſeth not rough things, nor refuſeth to wear that which is old and mean.

Nature reſpecteth temporal things, rejoiceth at earthly gain, ſorroweth for loſs, is moved with every little injurious word:

But grace thinketh on that which is everlaſting, and cleaveth not to temporal things; ſhe is not troubled at loſſes, nor diſquieted with hard words; becauſe ſhe hath placed her treaſure and joy in heaven, where nothing periſheth.

4. Nature is covetous, and doth more willingly receive than give; ſhe loveth her own things: But grace is bountiful, and liberal to all, ſhunneth private intereſt, is content with a little, thinketh that it is more bleſſed to give than to receive.

Nature inclines to the creatures, to her own fleſh, to vanities and wanderings;

But grace draweth unto God, and unto goodneſs, renounceth creatures, flieth the world, hateth the deſires of the fleſh, reſtraineth wanderings abroad, bluſheth to be ſeen in public.

Nature is willing to have ſome outward comfort, wherein ſhe may be ſenſibly delighted: But grace ſeeketh comfort in God alone, and delighted above all viſible things in the higheſt good.

5. Nature worketh all for her own gain and profit; ſhe can do nothing *gratis*, but for benefit; ſhe hopeth to obtain either that which is equal or better, either praiſe or favour, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much eſteemed:

But grace ſeeks no temporal thing, nor requires any other reward than God alone; nor deſireth more of temporal neceſſaries, than what may ſerve her for the obtaining of things eternal.

6. Nature rejoiceth to have many friends and kinſfolks; glorieth of noble place and birth; is obſequious to the powerful, fawneth upon the rich, applaudeth thoſe that are like herſelf;

But

But grace loveth her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitudes of friends! nor esteemeth place or birth, but where it is joined with virtue:

She rather favoureth the poor than the rich; hath more tenderness for the innocent than the powerful; rejoiceth in the true, not in the deceitful:

Always exhorting good men to labour for more excellent gifts, and by goodness to resemble the Son of God.

Nature quickly complaineth of want and trouble; grace with constancy endureth need.

7. Nature referreth all things to herself, striveth and contendeth for herself;

But grace reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed; she ascribeth no good to herself, neither doth she arrogantly presume; she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others; but in every apprehension and opinion submitteth herself unto the eternal Wisdom, and to the divine judgment.

Nature coveteth to know secrets, and to hear news; she will appear abroad,

and

and make proof of many things by her own ſenſes; ſhe deſireth to be known, and to do thoſe things for which ſhe may be praiſed and admired:

But grace careth not for hearing news, or curious matters: She teacheth to reſtrain the ſenſes, to avoid vanity and oſtentation; and in every thing and every knowledge to ſeek profitable fruit, and the praiſe and honour of God.

She will not have herſelf nor her's praiſed, but deſireth that God ſhould be bleſſed in his gifts, who of mere love beſtoweth all things.

XXXVIII. *Of the Corruption of Nature, and Efficacy of divine Grace.*

Chriſtian. O Lord, my God, who haſt created me after thy image and likeneſs, grant me this grace which thou haſt ſhewed to be ſo great and ſo neceſſary to ſalvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to ſin and perdition.

For I feel in my fleſh the law of ſin contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captive in many things; neither

neither can I reſiſt, unleſs thy moſt holy grace, fervently infuſed into my heart, aſſiſt me.

2. O Lord, how exceeding needful is thy grace for me to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accompliſh it:

For without it I can do nothing; but by thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth ſtrengthen me.

O heavenly grace, without which our moſt worthy actions are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be eſteemed.

Arts, riches, beauty, ſtrength, wit, eloquence, are of no value with thee, O Lord, without thy grace.

3. O moſt bleſſed grace, that makeſt the poor in ſpirit rich in virtues; and makeſt the rich in many bleſſings, to be humble in heart: Come down unto me; repleniſh me early with thy comfort, leſt my ſoul ſhould faint.

I beſeech thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in thy ſight; for thy grace is ſufficient for me, tho' other things that nature deſireth be wanting.

If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear any evil, while thy grace is with me;

This is my ſtrength, that giveth advice and help: That is ſtronger than all enemies, and wiſer than all the wiſe.

4. Thy grace is the miſtreſs of truth, the teacher of diſcipline, the light of the heart, the ſolace of affliction, the driver away of ſorrow, the expeller of fear, the nurſe of devotion, and the mother of tears.

What am I without it, but a withered piece of wood, and an unprofitable ſtock, only meet to be caſt away.

Let thy grace, therefore, O Lord, always prevent and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, thro' Jeſus Chriſt thy Son. *Amen.*

XXXIX. *That we ought to deny ourſelves, and imitate Chriſt.*

Chriſt. FOLLOW me; I am the way, the truth, and the Life.

Without the way there is no going aright, without the truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living.

I am the way, which thou oughteſt to follow; the truth, which thou oughteſt

eſt to truſt: the life, which thou ought-eſt to hope for.

I am the way inviolable, the truth infallible, the life which cannot end.

I am the moſt ſtraight way, the ſupreme truth, the true life: Yea, the bleſſed and uncreated life.

If thou remaineſt in my way, thou ſhalt know the truth, and the truth ſhall make thee free, and thou ſhalt lay hold on everlaſting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. If thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be my diſciple, renounce thyſelf. If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thyſelf upon earth.

If thou wilt reign with me, bear the croſs with me: For only the ſervants of the croſs, find the way of bliſs and true light.

3. Chriſtian. Lord Jeſus, foraſmuch as thy life was poor and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in ſuffering worldly contempt.

For the ſervant is not greater than his Lord, nor the diſciple above his maſter.

Let

Let thy ſervant be exerciſed in thy life, for therein my ſalvation and true holineſs conſiſt.

Whatſoever I read or hear beſides it, doth not refreſh or delight me fully.

4. Chriſt. Son, now that thou knoweſt theſe things, happy ſhall thou be, if thou doſt them. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;

And I will love him, and will manifeſt myſelf unto him, and make him ſit with me in the kingdom of my Father.

Chriſtian. Lord Jeſus, as thou haſt ſaid and promiſed, ſo let it come to paſs.

I have received the croſs, I have received it from thy hand; I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou haſt laid it upon me.

Truly the life of a chriſtian is the croſs; but yet it is a guide to paradiſe.

I have begun, I may not go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

Let us then take courage, my brethren, and go forwards together; Jeſus's will be with us.

For Jeſu's ſake we have undertaken his croſs: For Jeſu's ſake let us perſevere therein. He will be our helper, who is our guide and fore-runner.

Behold, our king goeth before us, who alſo will fight for us.

Let us follow him manfully: let us not be diſmayed, but be ready to die valiantly in the battle; and let us not blemiſh our glory, by flying from the croſs.

XL. *That a man be not too much dejected, when he feeleth ſome defect.*

Chriſt. SON, patience and humility in adverſity are more pleaſing to me, than much comfort and devotion in proſperity.

Why art thou grieved for every little trifle ſpoken againſt thee?

Altho' it had been much more, thou oughteſt not to have been moved.

But now let it paſs; it is not the firſt that hath happened, nor is it any new thing; neither ſhall it be the laſt, if thou liveſt long.

Thou art valiant enough, as long as no adverſity happeneth.

Thou

Thou canſt give good counſel alſo, and canſt ſtrengthen others with thy words; but when tribulation ſuddenly cometh to thy door, thou art deſtitute of counſel and ſtrength.

See therefore thy great frailty, which thou often haſt experienced upon ſlight occaſions. It is, notwithſtanding, intended for thy good, when theſe and ſuch like things befal thee.

I yet live, ſaith the Lord, ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort than before, if thou putteſt thy truſt in me, and calleſt devoutly upon me.

2. Be more patient, and prepare thyſelf for greater ſufferings.

All is not loſt, if thou feeleſt thyſelf often afflicted, or grievouſly tempted.

I am he who will ſtrengthen with health them that mourn, and raiſe up into divine glory, thoſe that know their own infirmity.

3. Chriſtian. Lord, bleſſed be thy word, more ſweet it is unto my mouth than honey and the honey-comb.

What ſhould I do in ſo great tribulations and ſtraits, unleſs thou didſt comfort me with thy holy words?

What matter is it, how much and what I ſuffer, ſo I may at length attain the port of ſalvation?

Grant me a good end; grant me a happy paſſage out of this world! Be mindful of me, O my God, and direct me in the right way to thy kingdom. *Amen.*

XLI. *Of ſearching the ſecret Judgments of God.*

Chriſt. SON, beware thou diſputeſt not of high matters, nor of the ſecret judgments of God:

Why this man is left, and that man taken into ſo great favour; why alſo this man is ſo much afflicted, and that man ſo greatly advanced.

Theſe things are beyond the reach of man; neither can any reaſon or diſputation ſearch out the judgments of God.

When the enemy therefore ſuggeſteth theſe things unto thee, or ſome curious people enquire of thee, anſwer, Thou art juſt, O Lord, and thy judgments are right.

And again, the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

My judgments are to be feared, not to be diſcuſſed; for they are ſuch as cannot be comprehended by the underſtanding of men.

2. Neither enquire or diſpute of the merits of ſaints, which of them is holier than the other, which of them is greater in the kingdom of heaven.

Theſe things often breed ſtrife and unprofitable contention: They nouriſh alſo pride and vain-glory, from whence ſpring envy and diſſenſions.

I am he who made all ſaints: I gave them grace: I will give them glory.

I know what every one hath deſerved; I have prevented them with the bleſſings of my goodneſs. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through ſundry temptations:

I poured into them glorious comforts, I gave them perſeverance: I will crown their patience.

3. I know both the firſt and the laſt; I embrace all with ineſtimable love.

I am to be praiſed in all my ſaints; I am to be bleſſed above all things, and to be honoured in every one.

XLII.

XLII. *That all our Hope and Truſt is to be fixed in God alone.*

Chriſtian. LORD, what is my truſt in this life? Or what is my greateſt comfort of all things under heaven?

Is it not thou, my Lord God, whoſe mercies are without number?

Where hath it been well with me, without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert preſent?

I had rather be poor for thee, than rich without thee. I had rather chuſe to be a pilgrim on earth with thee, than to poſſeſs heaven without thee.

Where thou art, there is heaven; and there is death and hell, where thou art not.

Thou art my deſire, and therefore I cannot but ſigh, and cry, and pray unto thee. For I have none to truſt in, none that can help me in my neceſſities, but thee alone, my God.

Thou art my hope, thou art my truſt, thou art my comfort, and moſt faithful unto me in all things.

2. All men ſeek their own; thou only ſeekeſt my ſalvation, and turneſt all things to my good.

Altho' thou expoſeſt me to divers temptations and adverſities; yet thou ordereſt all this to my advantage, who art wont to try thy beloved a thouſand ways.

In which trials thou oughteſt no leſs to be loved and praiſed, than if thou didſt fill me with heavenly comforts.

3. In thee, therefore, O Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge: On thee I reſt, in all tribulation and anguiſh. For I find all to be weak and inconſtant, whatſoever I behold out of thee.

For neither can my friends avail, nor ſtrong helpers, aid, nor wiſe counſellors give any profitable anſwer, nor the books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any ſecret or pleaſant place defend: if thou thyſelf doſt not aſſiſt, help, ſtrengthen, comfort, inſtruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that ſeem to make for peace and felicity, without thee are nothing, and do bring indeed no feli-

city

city at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the height of life, the depth of wiſdom: And the ſtrongeſt comfort of thy ſervants is, to truſt in thee above all things.

To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes; in thee, O my God, the Father of mercies, I put my truſt.

Bleſs and ſanctify my ſoul with thy heavenly bleſſing, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the ſeat of thy eternal glory:

And that nothing may be found in the temple of thy glory, that may offend the eyes of thy majeſty.

According to the greatneſs of thy goodneſs, and the multitude of thy mercies, look upon me, and hear the prayer of thy poor ſervant, who is far exiled from thee, in the land of the ſhadow of death.

Protect and keep the ſoul of thy ſervant amidſt ſo many dangers of this corruptible life; and, by thy grace accompanying me, direct it by the way of peace to the country of everlaſting light. *Amen.*

BOOK IV.

An EXHORTATION unto the HOLY COMMUNION.

The Voice of Chriſt.

COME unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you.

The bread which I will give is my fleſh, for the life of the world. Take, eat, this is my body, that is given for you: Do this in remembrance of me.

He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. The words, which I ſpeak unto you, are ſpirit and life.

I. *With how great reverence Chriſt ought to be received.*

The Voice of the Diſciple

THESE are thy words, O Chriſt, the everlaſting Truth. Becauſe therefore they are thine, and true, they are all thankfully to be received by me.

They are thine, and thou haſt ſpoken them: and they are mine alſo, becauſe thou haſt ſpoken them for my ſalvation.

I wil-

I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart.

These gracious words, so full of sweetness and love, encourage me; but mine own offences drive me back from receiving so great mysteries.

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee; to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting glory.

Come, sayest thou, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.

O sweet and friendly words in the ear of sinners, that thou, my Lord God, shouldest invite the poor and needy to the participation of thy most holy body!

But who am I, Lord, that I should presume to approach unto thee?

Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; and thou sayest, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth, this gracious condescension, this friendly invitation?

How shall I dare to come, that know no good in myself? How shall I

bring thee into my houſe, that have ſo often offended thy moſt gracious countenance?

The angels and archangels revere thee, and the ſaints and juſt men fear thee; and thou ſayeſt, Come ye all unto me!

Unleſs thou, O Lord, didſt ſay it, who would believe it to be true?

And unleſs thou didſt command it, who would dare to come unto thee?

Behold Noah, a juſt man, laboured a hundred years in making of the ark, that he might be ſaved with a few: And how can I in one hour prepare myſelf to receive with reverence the Maker of the world?

4. Moſes, thy great ſervant, and thy ſpecial friend, made an ark of incorruptible wood, which alſo he covered with moſt pure gold, to put the Tables of the law therein; and how ſhall I a corruptible creature, dare lightly to receive the Maker of the law, and the giver of life?

Solomon beſtowed ſeven years in building a magnificent temple to the praiſe of thy name.

He celebrated the feaſt of the dedication thereof, eight days together: He offered a thouſand peace-offerings, and ſolemnly ſet the ark on the place prepared for it, with the ſound of trumpets and joy.

And how ſhall I, the moſt miſerable and pooreſt of men, bring thee into my houſe, that can ſcarce ſpend one half hour devoutly?

Yea, would I could once ſpend near half an hour in a due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they do out of an endeavour to pleaſe thee! And, alas! how little is that which I do? How little time do I ſpend to prepare myſelf to receive thy ſalvation.

I am very ſeldom wholly very recollected, ſeldom free from all diſtraction.

And yet ſurely no unbecoming thought ought to appear in the preſence of the Deity, nor any creature find any place in me: For I am not to harbour an angel, but the Lord of angels.

6. And yet there is a great difference between the ark of the covenant, and thy moſt pure body! Between thoſe legal ſacrifices, figures of future things,

and

and the completion of all ancient ſacrifices.

Why therefore am I not more inflamed at thy venerable preſence?

7. David danced before the ark with all his might, calling to mind the benefits beſtowed in times paſt upon his fore-fathers. He made inſtruments of ſundry kinds, he compoſed pſalms, and appointed them to be ſung with joy:

He alſo ſung himſelf to the harp, being inſpired with the grace of the Holy Spirit. He taught the people of Iſrael to praiſe God with their whole heart, and with joint voices every day to bleſs and praiſe him.

If ſo great devotion was then ſhewn, and there was ſuch a celebrating of the divine praiſe before the ark of the teſtament; what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me, and all Chriſtian people, in receiving the moſt precious body and blood of Chriſt?

8. O God, the Creator of the world, how wonderfully doſt thou deal with us! How ſweetly and graciouſly doſt thou diſpoſe of all things to thine elect,

to whom thou offereſt thyſelf to be received in this ſacrament!

This exceedeth all underſtanding! This ſtrongly draweth the hearts of the devout, and inflameth the affections.

9. O the admirable and hidden grace of this ſacrament, which only the faithful know: But the unbelieving, and ſuch as are ſlaves unto ſin, cannot experience!

In this ſacrament ſpiritual grace is given, and ſtrength which was loſt reſtored in the ſoul, and the beauty disfigured by ſin, returns again.

This grace is ſometimes ſo great, that not only the mind, but the weak body alſo, feeleth great increaſe of ſtrength.

10. Our coldneſs and negligence is much to be bewailed, that we are not drawn with great affections to receive Chriſt, in whom all the hope of thoſe that are to be ſaved conſiſts.

For he is our ſanctification and redemption: he is the comforter of us travellers, and the everlaſting fruition of ſaints.

It is much therefore to be lamented, that many ſo little conſider the ſalutary

myſtery,

myſtery, which rejoiceth heaven, and preſerveth the whole world.

O the blindneſs and hardneſs of man's heart, that doth not more deeply weigh ſo unſpeakable a gift!

11. If the holy ſacrament was celebrated in one place only, and conſecrated by one only perſon in the world; with how great deſire would men be affected to that place, and to ſuch a miniſter, that they might enjoy theſe divine myſteries?

But now Chriſt is offered in many places, that ſo the grace and love of God to man may appear greater.

Thanks be unto thee, gracious Jeſus, the everlaſting ſhepherd, who haſt vouchſafed to refreſh us poor exiles with thy precious body and blood, and to invite us to the receiving of theſe myſteries with the words of thine own mouth, ſaying, Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you.

II. *That*

II. *That the great Goodneſs and Love of God is exhibited to Man in this Sacrament.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

IN confidence of thy goodneſs and great mercy, I come, O Lord, a ſick man, unto my Saviour; hungry and thirſty, to the Fountain of life; needy, to the king of heaven; a ſervant, unto my Lord; a creature, to his Creator; diſconſolate, to thee, my merciful comforter.

But whence is this to me, that thou vouchſafeſt to come unto me? Who am I, that thou ſhouldſt give thyſelf unto me? How dare a ſinner appear before thee? And how is it that thou doſt vouchſafe to come unto a ſinner?

Thou knoweſt thy ſervant, and ſeeſt that he hath no good thing in him, for which thou ſhouldeſt beſtow this favour upon him.

I confeſs therefore my unworthineſs: I acknowledge thy goodneſs: I praiſe thy mercy, and give thee thanks for this thy tranſcendent love.

For

For thou doſt this for thine own ſake, not for any merits of mine; that thy goodneſs may be better known unto me, thy love more abundantly ſhewn, and thy gracious condeſcenſion the more eminently diſplayed.

Since therefore it is thy pleaſure, and thou haſt commanded that it ſhould be ſo, this thy favour is alſo pleaſing to me, and may my ſins be no hinderance!

2. O moſt ſweet and benign Jeſus, how great reverence and thanks, together with perpetual praiſe, is due unto thee, for the receiving of thy ſacred body, whoſe preciouſneſs no man is able to expreſs!

But what ſhall I think now that I am to approach unto my Lord, whom I am not able duly to honour, and yet I deſire to receive him with devotion?

What can I think better and more profitable, than to humble myſelf wholly before thee, and to exalt thine infinite goodneſs over me?

I praiſe thee, my God, and will exalt thee for ever. I deſpiſe and ſubmit myſelf unto thee, in a deep ſenſe of my own unworthineſs.

3. Be-

3. Behold, thou inclineſt unto me, who am not worthy ſo much as to look up unto thee. Behold, thou art moſt holy, and I the vileſt of ſinners! Behold, thou comeſt unto me, it is thy will to be with me, thou inviteſt me to thy banquet.

Thou wilt give me the food of heaven, and bread of angels to eat, which is no other than thyſelf, the living bread, that deſcended from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

4. From whence doth this love proceed! What gracious condeſcenſion appeareth herein: How great thanks and praiſes are due unto thee for theſe benefits!

O how good and profitable was thy counſel, when thou ordaineſt it! How ſweet and pleaſant the banquet, when thou giveſt thyſelf to be our food!

How wonderful is thy operation, O Lord, how mighty is thy power, how unſpeakable is thy truth!

For thou ſaidſt the word, and all things were made; and this was done which thou commandeſt.

5. A thing of great admiration, that thou, my Lord God, ſhouldſt be exhibited unto us by the elements of bread and wine.

Thou, who art the Lord of all things, and ſtandeſt in need of none, haſt pleaſed to dwell in us by means of this thy ſacrament.

Preſerve my heart and body undefiled, that with a cheerful and pure conſcience, I may often celebrate thy myſteries, and receive them to my everlaſting health: Which thou haſt ordained and inſtituted for thy honour and for a perpetual memorial.

6. Rejoice, O my ſoul, and give thanks unto God, for ſo excellent a gift, ſo ſingular a comfort left unto me in this vale of tears.

For as often as thou celebrateſt this myſtery, and receiveſt the body of Chriſt; ſo often art thou made partaker of all the merits of Chriſt.

For the love of Chriſt is never diminiſhed, and the greatneſs of his propitiation is never exhauſted:

Therefore thou oughteſt always to weigh with attentive conſideration this great myſtery of thy ſalvation.

So great, new, and joyful, it ought to ſeem unto thee, when thou comeſt to theſe holy myſteries; as if the ſame day Chriſt firſt deſending into the womb of the virgin, was become man; or hanging on the croſs, did ſuffer and die for the ſalvation of mankind.

III. *That it is profitable to communicate often.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

BEHOLD, O Lord, I come unto thee, that I may be comforted by thy gift, and delighted in thy holy banquet which thou, O God, haſt prepared in thy goodneſs for the poor.

Behold, in thee is all I can or ought to deſire; thou art my ſalvation, and my redemption, my hope and my ſtrength, my honour and my glory!

Make joyful therefore this day the ſoul of thy ſervant, for I have lifted it up unto thee, O Lord Jeſus.

I deſire to receive thee now with devotion and reverence. I long to bring thee into my houſe; that with Zaccheus I may be bleſſed by thee, and numbered among the children of Abraham.

My ſoul thirſteth to receive thy body and blood; my heart deſireth to be united with thee.

2. Give me thyſelf and it ſufficeth; for beſides thee, no comfort is available.

I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy viſitation;

And therefore I muſt often come unto thee, and receive thee for the welfare of my ſoul, leſt haply I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy heavenly food.

For ſo, moſt merciful Jeſus, thou once didſt ſay, preaching to the people, and curing ſundry diſeaſes, "I will not ſend them home faſting, leſt they faint in the way."

Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who haſt vouchſafed to leave thyſelf in the ſacrament for the comfort of the faithful.

For thou art the ſweet refection of the ſoul; and he that eateth thee worthily, ſhall be partaker of everlaſting glory.

3. O the wonderful condeſcenſion of thy mercy towards us, that thou, O Lord God, the creator and giver of life

life to all ſpirits, doſt vouchſafe to come unto a poor ſoul, and with thy whole deity to repleniſh her hunger!

O happy mind and bleſſed ſoul, that receives thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee is filled with ſpiritual joy!

O how great a Lord doth ſhe entertain! How beloved a gueſt doth ſhe harbour! How pleaſant a companion doth ſhe receive! How faithful a friend doth ſhe take in! How lovely and glorious a ſpouſe doth ſhe embrace!

She embraceth him, who is to be loved above all that is beloved, and above all things that may be deſired.

Let heaven and earth and all the hoſts of them, be ſilent in thy preſence: for what praiſe and beauty ſoever they have, it is received from thy bounty, and cannot equal the beauty of thy name, of whoſe wiſdom there is no number.

IV. *That many gifts are beſtowed upon them that communicate devoutly.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy ſervant with the bleſſings of thy ſweetneſs, that I may approach worthily and devoutly to thy glorious ſacrament.

Stir up my heart unto thee, and deliver me from a heavy numbneſs of mind.

Viſit me with thy ſalvation, that I may taſte in ſpirit thy ſweetneſs, which plentifuly lieth hid in this ſacrament as in a fountain.

Enlighten alſo my eyes to behold ſo great a myſtery, and ſtrengthen me to believe it with ſteady faith.

For it is thy work and not man's power; thy ſacred inſtitution, not man's invention.

For no man is of himſelf able to comprehend theſe things, which ſurpaſs the underſtanding even of angels.

What therefore ſhall I, unworthy ſinner, duſt and aſhes, be able to comprehend of ſo high and ſacred a myſtery?

2. O Lord, in the ſimplicity of my heart, at thy commandment I come unto thee, with hope and reverence; and do truly believe that thou art preſent in this ſacrament.

Thy will is, that I receive thee, and that by love I unite myſelf unto thee.

Wherefore I implore thy mercy, and crave thy ſpecial grace, that I may wholly melt and overflow with love unto thee, and hereafter never ſeek any comfort out of thee.

For this ſacrament is the health of the ſoul and body, the remedy of all ſpiritual weakneſs; hereby my vices are cured, my paſſions bridled, temptations overcome, grace is infuſed, faith confirmed, hope ſtrengthened, and love inflamed.

3. For thou haſt beſtowed, and ſtill often doſt beſtow, many benefits in the ſacrament. O my God, the protector of my ſoul, the repairer of human frailty, and the giver of inward comfort.

Thou imparteſt unto them much comfort againſt ſundry tribulations.

Thou liſteſt them up from the depth of their own dejectedneſs, to hope in thy protection.

Thou doſt inwardly refreſh and enlighten them with new grace: ſo that they, who before communicating, were heavy and unaffected, after being refreſhed with heavenly meat and drink, find in themſelves a great change.

For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the fountain of ſweetneſs, doth not carry away from thence at leaſt ſome little ſweetneſs?

Or who, ſtanding by a great fire, receiveth not ſome ſmall heat thereby?

Thou art a fountain always full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Wherefore, if I cannot draw out of the full fountain itſelf, nor drink my fill; I will notwithſtanding ſet my lips to the mouth of this heavenly conduit, that I may draw from thence at leaſt ſome drops to refreſh my thirſt; and not be wholly dried up.

And though I be not altogether heavenly, nor ſo inflamed as the cherubim

and

and ſeraphim; notwithſtanding I will endeavour after ſome ſmall ſpark of divine fire, by humbly receiving this enlivening ſacrament.

And whatſoever is wanting in me, O merciful Jeſus, moſt holy Saviour, do thou graciouſly ſupply, who haſt vouchſafed to call all unto thee, "Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you."

5. I indeed labour in the ſweat of my brow, I am burthened with ſin, I am troubled with temptations, I am entangled with evil paſſions; and there is none to help me, none to ſave me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I commit myſelf, and all that is mine, that thou mayeſt keep me, and bring me to life everlaſting.

V. *Of the dignity of the ſacrament, and of the miniſterial function.*

The Voice of Chriſt.

IF thou hadſt the purity of an angel, and the ſanctity of St. John Baptiſt, thou wert not worthy to receive this ſacrament. For no man can deſerve to receive for food the bread of angels.

A great myſtery, and great is the dignity of the miniſters of God, to whom is given that which is not given to angels.

For they are the miniſters of God, uſing the word of God, by God's commandment and appointment.

But God is there, the principal author, and inviſible worker.

2. Conſider attentively whoſe miniſter thou art made; and ſee now, that thou faithfully and devoutly offer this ſacrifice to God in due time, and behave thyſelf unreprovably.

A miniſter ought to be adorned with all virtues, and to give an example to others. His converſation ſhould not be according to the ordinary way of men, but like to the angels in heaven.

3. A miniſter is to pray humbly with a proſtrate mind unto God for himſelf and the whole people: Neither ought he to ceaſe from prayer, till he obtain grace and mercy.

VI. *Of the examining our conſcience, and purpoſe of amendment.*

The Voice of the Beloved.

ABOVE all things, we ought to receive this ſacrament with great humility of heart, and lowly reverence and a pious intending of the honour of God.

Examine diligently thy conſcience; ſo as there be nothing burdenſome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorſe of conſcience, and hinder thy free acceſs. And confeſs unto God in the ſecret of thy heart all the miſeries of thy diſordered paſſions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet ſo carnal, ſo unmortified as to thy paſſions; So unwatchful over thy outward ſenſes, ſo often entangled with vain imaginations;

So cold in prayer, ſo dry in receiving; So quickly diſtracted, ſo ſeldom wholly recollected; So ſuddenly moved to anger, ſo apt to take diſpleaſure againſt another;

So prone to judge, ſo ſevere to reprehend; So often purpoſing much good, and yet performing little.

3. Theſe and other thy defects, being confeſſed, with full reſignation, and with thy whole will, offer up thyſelf a perpetual ſacrifice to the honour of my name on the altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy body and ſoul unto me:

That ſo thou mayeſt come worthily to receive the ſacrament of my body.

4. For a man hath no other oblation, than to offer up himſelf unto God in the holy communion.

And whenſoever he ſhall come to me for pardon and grace, as I live ſaith the Lord, who willeth not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he be converted and live, I will not remember his ſins any more, but they ſhall be forgiven him.

VII. *Of the oblation of Chriſt on the croſs, and reſignation of ourſelves.*

The Voice of the Beloved.

AS I willingly offered up myſelf unto God my Father for thy ſins, my hands being ſtretched forth on the croſs, and my body naked, ſo that nothing

thing remained in me that was not wholly turned into a ſacrifice, for the appeaſing the Divine Majeſty.

So oughteſt thou alſo to offer up thyſelf willingly unto me every day, as a pure and holy oblation, with all thy might and affections, in as hearty a manner as thou canſt.

What do I require of thee more, than that thou entirely reſign thyſelf unto me?

Whatſoever thou giveſt beſides thyſelf, is of no account in my ſight: For I ſeek not thy gifts, but thyſelf.

2. As it would not ſuffice thee to have all things beſides me: So neither can it pleaſe me, whatſoever thou giveſt, if thou offereſt not thyſelf.

Offer up thyſelf unto me, and give thyſelf wholly to God; and thy offering ſhall be accepted.

Behold, I offered up myſelf wholly unto my Father for thee, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine.

But if thou doſt not offer thyſelf up freely unto my will, thy oblation is not entire, neither will the union between us be perfect.

There-

Therefore a free offering up of thyſelf into the hands of God ought to go before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedom and grace.

For this cauſe, ſo few become inwardly free, becauſe they cannot wholly deny themſelves.

My ſaying is unalterable, "Unleſs a man forſake all, he cannot be my diſciple."

Therefore, if thou deſireſt to be my diſciple, offer up thyſelf unto me with thy whole affections.

VIII. *That we ought to offer up ourſelves, and all that is ours, unto God, and to pray for all.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

THINE, O Lord, are all things that are in heaven, and in earth.

I deſire to offer up myſelf unto thee, as a free oblation, and to remain always thine.

O Lord, in the ſimplicity of my heart I offer myſelf unto thee this day, for a ſacrifice of perpetual praiſe, to be thy ſervant for ever.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my ſins and offences, which I have committed before thee and thy holy angels, from the day wherein I firſt could ſin, to this hour, upon thy merciful altar.

Come and burn them all with the fire of thy love, and waſh out all the ſtains of my ſins.

O cleanſe my conſcience from all offences, and reſtore to me thy grace, which I loſt by ſin, fully forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully to the kiſs of peace!

3. What can I do for my ſins, but humbly confeſs and bewail them, and inceſſantly intreat thy favour?

I beſeech thee, hear me graciouſly, when I ſtand before thee, O my God!

All my ſins are very diſpleaſing unto me. I will never commit them any more; but I bewail, and will bewail them as long as I live, and am purpoſed to repent, and according to the utmoſt of my power to pleaſe thee.

Forgive me, O God, forgive me my ſins, for thy holy name's ſake.

Save my ſoul, which thou haſt redeemed with thy moſt precious blood.

Behold, I commit myſelf to thy mercy, I reſign myſelf over into thy hands.

Do with me according to thy goodneſs; not according to my wickedneſs.

4. I offer up alſo unto thee whatſoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou mayeſt amend and ſanctify it.

That thou mayeſt make it grateful and acceptable unto thee, and always perfect it more and more.

And bring me alſo, who am a ſlothful and unprofitable creature, to a good and bleſſed end.

5. I offer up alſo unto thee all the pious deſires of devout perſons, the neceſſities of my parents, friends, brethren, ſiſters; and of all thoſe that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to myſelf or others;

And that have deſired me to pray for them and all theirs: That they all may receive the help of thy grace, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain; and being freed from all evils,

may joyfully give worthy thanks unto thee.

6. I offer up alſo unto thee my prayers, eſpecially for them who have in any thing wronged, grieved or ſlandered me, or have done me any damage or diſpleaſure:

And for all thoſe alſo, whom I have at any time troubled, grieved, or ſcandalized, by words or deeds, wittingly or at unawares; that it may pleaſe thee to forgive us all our ſins and offences, one againſt another.

Take, O Lord, from our hearts all jealouſy, indignation, wrath and contention, and whatſoever may impair charity and leſſen brotherly love.

Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on thoſe that crave thy mercy; give grace unto them that ſtand in need thereof, and grant we may be counted worthy to enjoy thy grace and to attain to life everlaſting. *Amen.*

IX. *That*

IX. *That the Body of Chriſt, and the Holy Scriptures, are moſt neceſſary unto a faithful ſoul.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

O Lord Jeſus, how great ſweetneſs hath a holy ſoul that feaſteth with thee in thy banquet, where there is ſet no other food to be eaten but thyſelf, her only beloved, and the moſt to be deſired above all deſires of the heart!

And verily it would be a ſweet thing unto me to pour out tears from the very bottom of my heart in thy preſence; and with holy Magdalene, to waſh thy feet with my tears.

But where is this devotion? Where is this plentiful ſhedding of holy tears?

Surely, in the ſight of thee and thy holy angels, my whole heart ſhould be inflamed, and even weep for joy.

2. For to behold thee in thine own divine brightneſs, mine eyes would not be able to endure it.

Neither could the whole world ſtand in the brightneſs of the glory of thy majeſty.

I really

I really enjoy and adore him, whom the angels adore in heaven.

But I, as yet, by faith: They by ſight, and without a veil.

I ought to be content with the light of true faith, and to walk therein until the day of everlaſting brightneſs break forth, and the ſhadows of figures paſs away.

But when that which is perfect ſhall come, the uſe of ſacraments ſhall ceaſe.

For the bleſſed in glory need not any ſacramental remedy, but rejoice without end in the preſence of God.

Beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed from glory to glory, into the image of the incomprehenſible Deity, they taſte the word of God made fleſh, as he was from the beginning, and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Thou art my witneſs, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no creature can give me reſt, but thou my God, whom I deſire to behold everlaſtingly.

But this is not poſſible while I remain in this mortal life: Therefore I muſt frame myſelf to much patience,

and ſubmit myſelf to thee in all my deſires.

For thy ſaints alſo, O Lord, who now rejoice with thee, while they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe; what they hoped for, I alſo hope for; whither they are come, I truſt I ſhall come by the grace.

In the mean time I will go forward in faith, ſtrengthened by their examples.

4. I perceive two things to be eſpecially neceſſary for me in this life, without which it would be inſupportable.

Whilſt I am kept in the priſon of this body, I need two things, food and light.

Thou haſt therefore given unto me, a weak creature, thy ſacred body and blood for the nouriſhment of my ſoul and body; and thou haſt ſet thy word as a light unto my feet:

Without theſe two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the ſoul, and thy ſacrament the bread of life.

Theſe

Theſe alſo may be called the two tables, ſet on the one ſide and on the other, in the ſtore houſe of the holy church.

One is the holy altar, having the holy bread, that is the precious body of Chriſt. The other is the divine law, containing holy doctrine, teaching the true faith, and leading to that within the veil, where is the holy of holies.

Thanks be unto thee, O Lord Jeſus, the light of everlaſting life, for the table of holy doctrine, which thou haſt offered us by thy ſervants the prophets, and apoſtles, and other teachers.

5. Thanks be unto thee, O thou Creator and Redeemer of man, who to manifeſt thy love to the whole world, haſt prepared a great ſupper, wherein thou haſt ſet before us (not the typical lamb, but) thy moſt ſacred body and blood.

Rejoicing all the faithful with thy holy banquet and repleniſhing them with the cup of ſalvation, in which are all the delights of paradiſe: And the holy angels feaſt with us, but yet with a more happy ſweetneſs.

O how clean ought to be thoſe hands, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unſpotted that heart, where the Author of purity entereth!

Nothing but what is holy, no word but what is good and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, who receiveth the ſacrament of Chriſt.

6. Simple and chaſte ought to be the eyes that behold the body of Chriſt.

Pure and lifted up to heaven ſhould be the hands that receive the Creator of heaven and earth.

7. Aſſiſt us, Almighty God, with thy grace, that we may ſerve thee worthily and devoutly, in all purity and good conſcience.

And if we cannot live in ſo great innocency as we ought, grant us, at leaſt duly to bewail the ſins which we have committed; and in the ſpirit of humility, and with full purpoſe of heart, to ſerve thee hereafter more fervently.

X. *How he who is to communicate, ought to prepare himself.*

The Voice of the Beloved.

I Am the lover of purity, and the giver of all holiness. I seek a pure heart, and there is the place of my rest.

Make ready and adorn for me the great chamber, and I will keep with thee the passover among my disciples.

2. Know thou, notwithstanding, that no merit of any action of thine is able to make this preparation, although thou shouldest prepare thyself a whole year together, and think of nothing else.

Thou art of my mere grace and favour, suffered to come to my table.

Like a beggar invited to dinner, by a rich man, who hath nothing else to return him for his benefits, but to humble himself, and give him thanks.

Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custom, not for necessity; but with fear and reverence, and affection, receive thy beloved Lord God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee.

I am he that hath called thee; I have commanded it to be done: I will ſupply what is wanting in thee; come and receive me.

3. When I beſtow the grace of devotion, give thanks to thy God: For it is given thee, not for that thou art worthy, but becauſe I have mercy on thee.

If thou haſt it not, continue in prayer, ſigh, and knock, and give not over until thou art meet to receive ſome drop of ſaving grace.

Thou haſt need of me, not I of thee.

Neither comeſt thou to ſanctify me, but I come to ſanctify and improve thee in virtue.

Thou comeſt that thou mayeſt be ſanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou mayeſt receive new grace, and be inflamed anew to amendment.

XI. *That a devout ſoul ought to deſire with her whole heart to be united unto Chriſt in the ſacrament.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

WHO will give me this, O Lord, to find thee alone, and open my

my whole heart unto thee, and enjoy thee as my ſoul deſireth?

And that no man may look toward me, nor any creature move or regard me, but thou alone mayeſt ſpeak unto me, and I unto thee, as the beloved is wont to ſpeak to his beloved, and a friend to banquet with his friend.

This I pray for, this I deſire, that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things:

That I may, by often communicating, learn more and more to reliſh heavenly and eternal things.

Ah Lord God, when ſhall I be wholly united to thee, ſwallowed up in thee, and altogether forgetful of myſelf?

Thou in me, and I in thee; ſo grant us both to continue in one.

2. Verily thou art my beloved, the choiceſt among thouſands, in whom my ſoul is well pleaſed to dwell all the days of her life.

Verily thou art my peace-maker, in whom is great peace and true reſt, without whom is labour and ſorrow, and infinite miſery.

Verily, thou art a God that hideſt thyſelf, and thy counſel is not with the wicked, but thy ſpeech is with the humble and ſimple of heart.

O Lord, how ſweet is thy Spirit, who to ſhew thy ſweetneſs toward thy children, vouchſafeſt to feed them with the bread which deſcendeth from heaven.

Verily, there is no other nation ſo great, that hath God ſo nigh unto them, as thou our God art to all thy faithful ones.

Unto whom, for their daily comfort, and for the raiſing up of their hearts to heaven, thou giveſt thyſelf to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other nation is there ſo honoured as the Chriſtian people?

Or what creature under heaven ſo beloved as a devout ſoul, to whom God himſelf cometh, to feed her with his glorious fleſh?

O unſpeakable grace! O admirable condeſcenſion! O infinite love, ſingularly beſtowed upon man!

But what ſhall I give unto the Lord, in return for his grace, for ſo eminent an expreſſion of love?

There is nothing more acceptable that I am able to give, than to give my heart wholly to my God, and unite it close unto him.

Then shall my inward parts, rejoice, when my soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me, If thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee.

And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will gladly be with thee.

This is my whole desire, that my heart may be united unto thee.

XII. *Of the fervent desires of devout persons to receive the Lord's Supper.*

The Voice of the Disciple.

O How great is thy goodness, O Lord, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee;

When I remember some devout persons, who come unto thy sacrament; O Lord, with the greatest devotion and affection, I am confounded, and blush within myself, that I come so heavily and coldly to thy table:

That

That I remain ſo dry and without hearty affection, that I am not wholly inflamed in thy preſence, my God, nor ſo earneſtly drawn in affection, as many devout perſons have been, who, with deſire both of ſoul and body, earneſtly longed after thee, O God, the living fountain.

Be merciful unto me, good Jeſu, ſweet and gracious Lord; and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feel ſometimes at leaſt, in this holy communion, ſomewhat of thy tender cordial affection.

That my faith may be more ſtrengthened, my hope in thy goodneſs increaſed; and that my love once perfectly inflamed, after the taſting of heavenly manna, may never decay.

2. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I deſire, and to viſit me with the ſpirit of fervour when it ſhall pleaſe thee.

For though I burn not with ſo great deſires as thoſe that are ſo ſingularly devoted to thee; yet by thy grace, I deſire to have this inflamed deſire;

Praying

Praying and craving that I may partake with all ſuch thy fervent lovers, and be numbered among them.

XIII. *That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and renouncing ourſelves.*

The Voice of the Beloved.

THOU oughteſt to ſeek the grace of devotion fervently, to aſk it earneſtly, to expect it patiently and with confidence, to receive it gratefully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the time and manner of this heavenly viſitation to God, until it ſhall pleaſe him to come unto thee.

Thou oughteſt chiefly to humble thyſelf, when thou feeleſt inwardly little devotion: And yet not to be too much dejected.

God often giveth in a moment, that which he hath a long time denied.

He giveth ſometimes in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer he deferreth to grant.

It is ſometimes a little thing that hindereth grace from us: If it may be called

called little, and not rather great, that hindereth ſo great good.

But if thou removeſt this, be it great or ſmall, thou ſhalt have thy deſire.

2. For, as ſoon as ever thou haſt delivered thyſelf to God with thy whole heart, and ſeekeſt not this or that for thine own pleaſure or will, but fixeſt thyſelf wholly upon him, thou ſhalt find thyſelf united and at peace.

For nothing will reliſh ſo well, and pleaſe thee ſo much, as what pleaſes the divine will.

5. Then ſhall he ſee, and be filled, and wonder, and his heart ſhall be enlarged within him; becauſe the hand of the Lord is with him, and he hath put himſelf wholly into his hands for ever.

Behold, ſo ſhall the man be bleſſed, that ſeeketh God with his whole heart. This man obtaineth a high degree of divine union, in receiving the holy euchariſt. Becauſe he reſpecteth not his own comfort, but, above all comfort, the honour and glory of God.

XIV.

XIV. *That we ought to lay open our neceſſities to Chriſt, and crave his Grace.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

O Moſt loving Lord, whom I now deſire to receive with all devotion, thou knoweſt my infirmity, and the neceſſity which I endure, with how many evils I am oppreſſed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled and defiled. I am come unto thee for a remedy, I crave of thee comfort and ſuccour.

I ſpeak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my inward parts are open, and who alone can perfectly comfort and help me.

Thou knoweſt what good things I ſtand moſt in need of, and how poor I am in virtues.

2. Behold, I ſtand before thee poor and naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy.

Refreſh thy hungry beggar, inflame my coldneſs with the fire of thy love, enlighten my blindneſs with the brightneſs of thy preſence.

Turn all earthly things to me into bitterneſs, all things grievous into patience, all created things into contempt and oblivion.

Lift up my heart to thee in heaven, and ſuffer me not to wander upon earth.

Be thou only ſweet unto me from henceforth for evermore.

For thou only art my meat and my drink, my love and my joy, my ſweetneſs and all my good.

3. O that with thy preſence thou wouldſt wholly inflame, and transform me into thyſelf!

That I might be made one ſpirit with thee, by the grace of inward union, and by the meltings of ardent love!

Suffer me not to go from thee hungry and thirſty; but deal mercifully with me, as thou haſt often dealt wonderfully with thy ſaints.

What marvel is it, if I ſhould be wholly inflamed by thee, and die to myſelf;

Since thou art a fire always burning and never decaying, love purifying the heart, and enlighting the underſtanding!

XV. *Of fervent love, and vehement deſires to receive Chriſt.*

The Voice of the Diſciple.

WITH great devotion and ardent love, with the affection and fervour of my whole heart, I deſire to receive thee, O Lord, as many ſaints and devout perſons have deſired thee, when they received thy ſacrament, who were moſt pleaſing unto thee in holineſs of life, and moſt fervent in devotion.

O my God, my everlaſting love, my whole good, my never-ending happineſs, I would gladly receive thee with the moſt vehement deſire, and moſt worthy reverence that any of the ſaints ever had or could feel.

2. And altho' I be unworthy to have all thoſe feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had all thoſe inflamed deſires:

Yea, and whatſoever an holy mind can conceive and deſire, all this, with the greateſt reverence, and moſt inward affection, I offer and preſent unto thee.

I deſire

I desire to reserve nothing to myself, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice myself and all mine unto thee.

My Lord God, my Creator and my Redeemer! I desire to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise, and honour, with such gratitude, worthiness and love, with such faith, hope and purity, as thy holy mother received and desired thee, when she humbly and devoutly answered the angel, who declared unto her the mystery of thy incarnation, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word."

3. And as thy blessed fore-runner John Baptist, leaped for joy, by reason of the Holy Ghost, while he was shut up in his mother's womb; And afterwards seeing Jesus walking among men, humbling himself deeply, said with devout affection, "The friend of the bridegroom, that standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy for the voice of the bridegroom;" so I wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires, and to offer myself up to thee with my whole heart.

Where-

Wherefore I offer alſo, and preſent unto thee, the joys, fervent affections, extaſies, and ſupernatural illuminations and heavenly viſions of all devout hearts, with all the virtues and praiſes celebrated by all creatures in heaven and earth, that by all thou mayeſt be worthily praiſed and glorified for ever.

4. Receive, my Lord God, my wiſhes and deſires of giving thee infinite praiſe and immenſe bleſſings, which according to the multitude of thy unſpeakable greatneſs, are moſt juſtly due unto thee.

Theſe I yield thee, and deſire to yield thee every day and moment; I do intreat and invite all heavenly minds, and all thy devout ſervants to give thanks and praiſes together with me.

5. Let all people, tribes, and tongues praiſe thee, and magnify thy holy name, with the higheſt joy and moſt fervent devotion:

And let all, that reverently celebrate the holy ſacrament, find grace and mercy at thy hands, and pray humbly for me a ſinful creature.

And when they ſhall have obtained their deſired devotion and joyful union,

and depart from thy ſacred heavenly table, well comforted, and marvellouſly refreſhed, let them vouchſafe to remember my poor ſoul.

FINIS.

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